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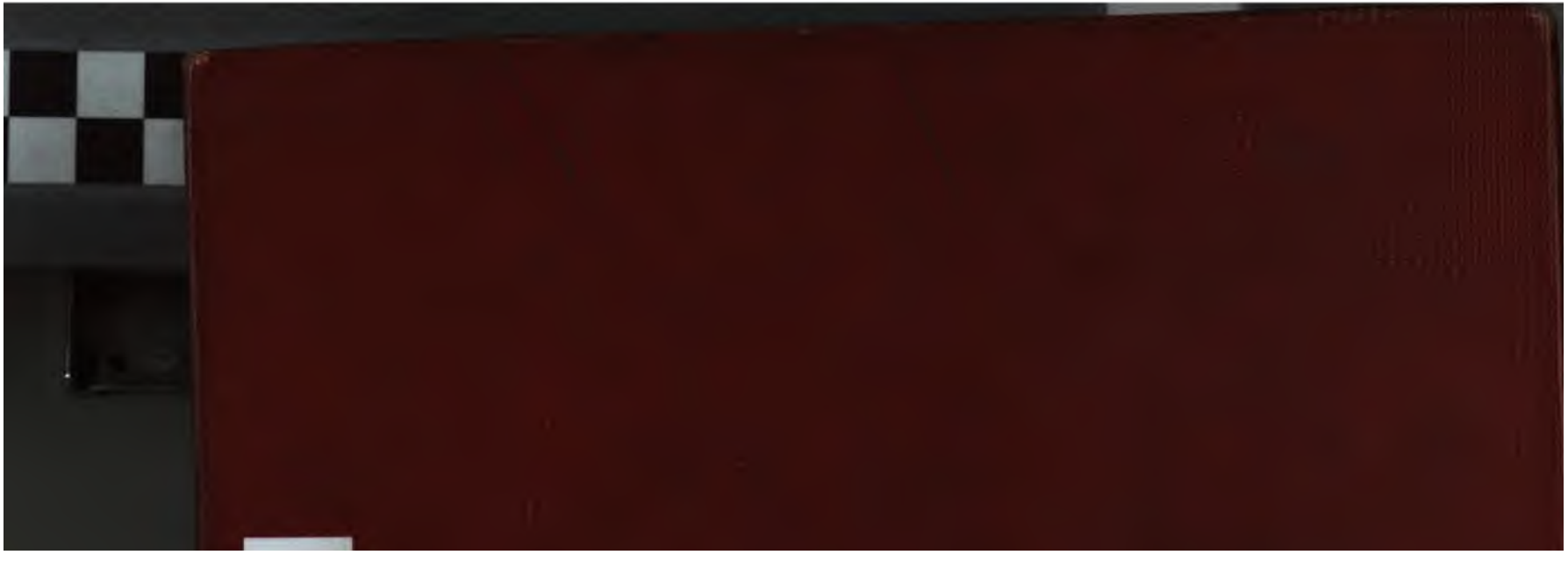
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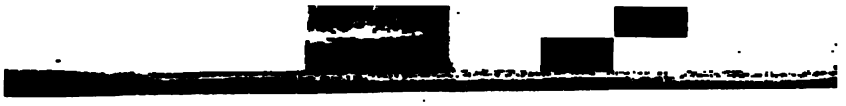
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BRANDED MEN AND WOMEN

STORY OF A WESTERN TOWN

BY

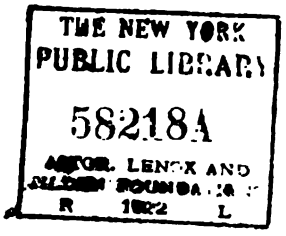
WILLIAM FRANCIS HOOKER



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TO THE TENS OF THOUSANDS OF MEN
AND WOMEN WHO STARTED WRONG,
BUT FOUND THE RIGHT ROAD AND
SUCCESSFULLY FOLLOWED IT, THIS
BOOK IS FEELINGLY DEDICATED



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BOOK I



"And while the lamp holds out to burn,
The vilest sinner may return."
—Old Hymn (Isaac Watts)

"Wherefore I say unto you, All manner of sin and blasphemy shall be forgiven unto men." . . .

BRANDED MEN AND WOMEN

CHAPTER I

ISAAC THOMAS ELLARSON VIEWS HIS FUTURE HOME

The sun was just rising over the foothills of the Sawtooth Range; a coyote yip-yip-yipped his mournful adieu to the vanishing night and a salute to the morning sun. Isaac Thomas Ellarson unwound himself from his single grey blanket, kicked the white ashes from a small bed of coals, threw on a few splinters of pitch pine, yawned and looked from his elevation of 7,000 feet above sea-level down into the Sawtooth Valley. His were the eyes of a tenderfoot; therefore, what he saw entranced him, and for a time he forgot the breakfast of bread, coffee and bacon he had planned the night before when he threw off his sixty-pound pack and went into camp.

Down in the valley he saw the first signs of life that had met his gaze since leaving the rail-

road at Buckhorn—a homesteader's cabin, from the cobble-stone chimney of which came smoke that mounted to a high point and then spread out like a fog. It was June, and the surface was green in spots between the fields of sage. The quail that had sought the hills for the night were now swirling toward the fields of wild grass in large numbers, and with the exception of their br-r-r-ing and the far-off salute of the coyote, all was silent. It was a new picture for this traveler.

Isaac Thomas Ellarson was not accustomed to camping out at night, but had chosen this method of reaching the valley for the purpose of testing his ability to rough it. He could have engaged a team to take him to his destination, for he had money in the Buckhorn bank that was deposited to his order before he left New York. He had come to this beautiful wild spot to take up land, and to live and perhaps accumulate a fortune. His first night had been spent on the plains thirty miles from his starting point, and the journey had wearied him greatly; he was footsore and stiff in every joint. However, by sundown of the second day he had again tramped nearly thirty miles, some of the distance in the pass through the range, where he camped for the night when darkness made the trail indistinct; and he did not know his destination was to be in sight in the morning.

Ellarson had allowed his beard to grow in ragged fashion, wore a slouch hat, corduroy trousers and a plain dark shirt; no vest, carried his coat in his pack and shouldered a Winchester. Only a plainsman or a mountaineer would discover at a glance that he was a tenderfoot; he looked the part he had come West to play.

Before ten o'clock he had reached Baxter's, once a stage-station of renown, now a gathering place for homesteaders. In a week he had located from land office descriptions a certain quarter-section and made a proper filing.

Isaac Thomas Ellarson ultimately became known to the scattered citizens of Gorton county as Sawtooth Ike, it being the custom of the people there to provide one another with names that would identify the person with a mannerism, a peculiar appearance, or expression. If a man were inordinately fond of lean meat they called him "Lean Bacon," or if he dwelt upon a topic, as Isaac Ellarson did upon the Sawtooth range and valley, it was natural for them to attach Sawtooth to a corruption of his given name: consequently Sawtooth Ike. A man's status in the community made no difference—he was rechristened sooner or later.

Ellarson, while generally looked upon by the settlers in the valley as an unlettered man, was

not by any means regarded as ignorant, but as a good-natured, harmless sort of fellow, displaying at times some knowledge of the world. He had, they discovered, whenever he was drawn into conversation, accumulated many of the wise sayings of Ben Franklin and other philosophers, though only a few of them had ever heard of Ben Franklin or any other philosopher.

Nothing could be mentioned that did not bring from Sawtooth Ike's lips a quotation. If there had been two recent deaths in a homesteader's family Ike would be sure to say, "It never rains but it pours," and if Eph Hudson took his tenth drink and stood up under it Ike could be depended upon to remark, "Beware of the cup that inebriates." Ike in the course of two or three years became more or less of a mystery to everyone.

Finally came a force of men to dredge an irrigation ditch, a project intended to utilize the waters of Flathead creek in the uplands and flats of Sawtooth Valley. The matter had been under discussion ever since the first settlers arrived, and the improvement was welcomed by everyone, including Ellarson, though his actions were contradictory and mysterious. Sometimes he seemed not to want the ditch built.

One day, after the water had been sluiced into the first section of the ditch, and the surveyor had fixed the levels and examined the flow to note

how well his work had been done, Ike said to him:

"The laborer is worthy of his hire!"

"Who said so?" queried Surveyor Atkins.

"I did!"

"But where did you hear that?"

"Don't recollect," admitted Ike; "but it's true, isn't it?"

"Ye-s," replied Atkins—"sometimes it is—sometimes it isn't. But why did you make that observation to me?"

"Well, you see, I just thought it; that's all, and then I thought that 'everything comes to him who waits', but didn't say so. You see, I've talked and argued for a long time in favor of this ditch, and you've come along with a big company and put it in, employing a lot of men digging and dredging. You and your men ought to be paid well, and I guess you are; and so far as I'm concerned, I waited and the ditch came. I get it without working and you get a ditch by working."

"You worked your jaw, didn't you?" said Atkins.

"Yes, but 'talk is cheap and it takes money to buy land,'" Ike replied, smiling. "The talking I did was done with ease; you fellows sweat and toiled for wages, but I get the water for the alfalfa I'm going to seed in—*maybe!* Makes me

think I'll be an early bird, and you know 'the early bird catches the worm!' "

"You're an epigrammatical, pithy sort of a cuss, I should say," ventured the surveyor, and the next instant Sawtooth Ike was headed for his cabin up creek, chuckling to himself.

A week later the water was in the second section of the main ditch, near which Sawtooth's claim was located, and to which Sawtooth had built no laterals. His quarter-section had been homesteaded and a clear title secured; but Sawtooth Ike, beyond raising a few head of cattle and breeding mules had done little in the way of work. He had, to be sure, dug postholes a year after the ditch digging began, and had hauled from Mountain creek a few dozen posts and distributed them along the west margin of his land, but none had been set, and half of the postholes had been filled by drifting sand or dirt or had caved in.

Ike talked a great deal about the crops he could and would raise when he got water and spent a great deal of time at Baxter's gin mill, always "on the wagon." But his neighbors, most of whom unlike himself, took up claims in anticipation of the building of a "water project," had lost no time in getting ready, and when the rules and regulations, the water tolls, and other preliminaries had been fixed, they *were* ready; some

of them had broken the sod on the hillsides and flats. But Sawtooth Ike's quarter-section promised to be a desert of brown grass, sage and cactus in the center of a community of growing crops of alfalfa, sugar beets, wheat and vegetables.

In Baxter's one night Joe Watson, a member of the Lima Bean Poker Club (so-called because the players used beans as chips), undertook to question Ike about his plans, but the result was unsatisfactory.

"You see," drawled Ike, "my quarter-section is right smack in the middle of the valley, and every road to outside meets another road some place either on my property or close to it. Little Sawtooth and its branches and dry Deer creek come down within a mile of my cabin, which is in the center of the highest and flattest spot on the quarter-section, and it is handy to get from the inside to the outside. I like to be in a convenient place, and the view in every direction is perfect. Look at those blue teeth of old Sawtooth!"

And then Ike drank his sarsaparilla pop in silence while Watson wondered why Ike, in his conversation, omitted to quote a wise saying of some sort to embellish his language, so Watson said:

"Ike, why don't you say something smart—like 'in the midst of life we are in death,' or 'strike while the iron is hot'?"

"I've quit that lay," said Ike, draining his glass, "because it was giving me a bad name hereabouts; you see, I met Atkins, the surveyor, the other day and in trying to be decent with him said, 'the laborer is worthy of his hire,' and he seemed peeved."

Atkins, together with a stranger in the neighborhood, called on Ike about a month after the water had been sluiced into every section of the project.

"Ike," he began, "the last time we met you seemed offended at something I said; but you didn't understand. You thought I was abusing you when as a matter of fact what I said was a compliment."

"That's all right, I've nearly forgotten all about it," began Ike; " 'let bygones be bygones.' but I'm tending to my own business most of the time! Don't forget that!"

"There's no doubt about it, Mr. Ellarson."

"When did you think it worth while to handle me with my right moniker?" interrupted Sawtooth Ike.

Atkins was a bit embarrassed and parried the question by saying:

"Now, Mr. Ellarson, I want you to meet my friend, Mr. Lawrence—Edward J. Lawrence—of St. Paul. Mr. Lawrence is a civil engineer and represents some pretty big interests in the

west and the northwest, and has been taking a trip through Sawtooth Valley. He likes what he has seen so far, and is talking of buying some land now that we've got the water going. He has taken a fancy to your quarter-section; and inasmuch as you are letting it go for range, and he wants a farm, he thought he might give you more than enough to pay for three or four sections of range land a few miles back in the hills where there never will be any irrigation ditches to disturb the cattle folk."

"I've never thought of selling," said Ike, quietly, "and don't know as I would consider any kind of a proposition; but I'm ready to listen. Shoot!"

Mr. Lawrence was an affable man, in the prime of life, and having the polish of one to the manor born; but he was in the wooly west, and undertook no display of his true culture; in truth he rather borrowed some of the common expressions and intonations of the vicinity in his talks with those he met; and he was dressed to play the part that had been assigned to him. He wore top-boots, a two-piece business suit, a flannel shirt —no necktie—and a moderately broad white felt hat, but not of the sombrero variety; and he smoked a pipe.

"I'm a city man," he said, addressing Ike after the formalities of an introduction had been

passed, "and am young—only thirty-five, married, and have a family of youngsters that I want to bring up in a new country where opportunity will be large and health assured. The city is no place for boys—I have three—and I want them to grow up with this new country. I have made money as a civil engineer, and am looking for a place to invest where there is a good chance to develop, as I have suggested. For a week I've been traveling up and down this valley, and into the ravines and canyons of the range, and it looks to me as if this valley, in time—say twenty years—when my boys are able to shift for themselves—might be very prosperous, to say the least. I'd like to put your quarter-section under cultivation—make a kind of experimental farm of it—and if I bought it would possibly erect some fine buildings, fence it, and maybe put in an orchard as well as a crop of alfalfa, which is going to be the staple crop of this valley; although, where wild plums and wild strawberries and blackberries grow, I know cultivated orchards will do well. I wouldn't be at all surprised if this soil, which is an accumulation of hundreds of years of volcanic formation—washings from the high lands—would produce fine apples and cherries. Have you ever put a price on your land?"

"Well, no," said Ike slowly. "I never have—never thought of selling, in fact. It looks as good

to me—and a little better since I heard you talk—than it did when I filed my preemption papers at Bordertown, and put up a claim shanty which you see over there is at present a lean-to to my log shack. I've waited a long time to see this irrigation project go through—and it's through. 'Everything comes to him who waits' is a lazy man's saying, and I've about worn it out saying it the past few years. But I've waited and find myself in the center of an agricultural community—farms under the plow in every direction and on every side; but I've fussed along here with a few cows and a mule or two, cut a few fence posts, dug a few holes and—well, I've lived and am in love with the place. Guess I'll go on with my fencing next spring. Don't think I could give you a figure today; come around again before you go away, and I'll take you around the property."

Night was coming on and Atkins and Lawrence hit the trail afoot for Baxters' three miles east at the edge of the creek. They promised to call again. The state road led from the northern end of Ike's land to the door of Baxter's, and this they took. It was a mere trail across the sod, and fringed several farms now under cultivation and showing green blankets that were in striking contrast with the sunburned surface of Sawtooth Ike's land, which made, when viewed from a high knoll over which the state road ran, a veri-

table yellow square in a great checkerboard of green, bordered and crossed by canals and laterals. It was here that Sawtooth Ike had dug perhaps a hundred postholes and distributed the posts which had been checked by the sun, the bark rotting off and lying in strips here and there, where it had been blown by the winds of early spring. Stopping at one of the holes, Mr. Lawrence stooped and picked up a handful of dark red soil, crushed it with his fingers, spread it out in his left palm, and exclaimed:

"Great guns, Atkins, this is a fine quality of Bessemer ore! Let's hurry on and look into a few more of these postholes. Funny thing, old man, you made no mention of anything of this sort in any of the monthly reports to the company! How about it? Your main ditch isn't 1,000 yards from this spot!"

"Sure enough," replied Atkins, "but we are above the ditch a thousand yards, or more, and the ravine yonder which we just crossed drains exactly away from the ditch. The geological formation here is as different from that where the ditch runs as day is from night. I've never even been over this trail; fact is I've stuck to my survey and the company's blueprints regardless of everything. The thing for us to do is to get to a retort and reduce some of this stuff!"

At two o'clock next morning when the Saw-

tooth Valley was slumbering—barring the members of the Lima Bean Poker Club at Baxter's—Atkins and Lawrence stole out of the irrigation company's building, each with a gunny sack and a shovel, and began the hike to Sawtooth Ike's ranch. There was a full moon, but every few minutes dark clouds covered it, and only a portion of the great dome revealed the twinkling stars.

"I hope it rains pitch-forks," exclaimed Lawrence.

"So do I!" agreed Atkins, "for with that moon at full you can see a rabbit cross the trail a mile away."

On they trudged toward the postholes, and when a mile from the first one where a sample of the ore had been picked up, the rain came down in sheets, accompanied by vivid flashes of lightning, which seemed to light up the whole country. It was the first storm of the kind in five years. Every few minutes a flash would reveal in all their majesty the peaks of the Sawtooth range, twenty miles away, but now apparently within a few yards. They found a deserted dugout at the road-side into which they retreated to wring the water from their clothing and empty their boots. It was a fierce storm, and though both were provided with raincoats they were soaked to the skin.

At Baxter's Ike was one of the six regulars

who were counting the chips and growling about a greasy deck that was never known to produce four of a kind or a straight flush; and Ike, being in a dreamy frame of mind and unable to concentrate his thoughts upon the game, finally arose and announced that he was out of the game, although a time-limit had been set at 4:30 a. m. But as he quit a loser he was allowed to go.

"It looks like a big storm is coming," suggested Ed. Birdsell, "and you'll have to hump if you intend to get home ahead of it."

"Never mind about that," said Ike. "I've got old Baldy, one of my best mules in the shed, and when I head him for home I'll have to hang on tight or he'll beat me to it. Good night, fellows!"

And away he sped.

The downpour let up after Atkins and Lawrence had been in the dugout half an hour, but the rain continued to fall in a steady drizzle. It was dark as ink, and the road hard to follow, but they managed to reach the postholes and filled their gunny sacks with samples of the rich Bessemer which they slung over their shoulders. Then began the tramp on the back-trail. They sloshed and slipped along for ten or fifteen minutes without a word, when suddenly out of the blackness loomed the big mule with Ike on his bare back. They were just able to step aside in time to escape being run over.

"What the deuce—! Who is it?"

It was Ike shouting. Lawrence dropped his sack and Atkins followed suit. They recognized Ike at the same moment and both responded to his query, one saying "a couple of travelers" and the other "we are on the way home."

Finally Lawrence, who seemed not to be at all disturbed by their discovery, stepped up to Ike, who had dismounted and held his mule by the bridle, and said:

"Why, it's Mister Saw—Ellarson, isn't it? Aren't you out late?"

"Well, no; but aren't you afraid of getting lost?"

"Oh, no; when Atkins built the main ditch he was instructed to lay aside samples of the soil for the company, and just for an evening walk we started out last night to pick 'em up where he left 'em in a dugout, and then the storm came. It's this way: The company takes this dirt to the state agricultural college and has it analyzed, and the professors make a report telling just the kind of crops it will raise when properly irrigated—alfalfa, melons, beets, cucumbers or wheat. . . . Gee, this is some soaking we got, didn't we, Atkins?"

"Yes, indeed," said Atkins, rather sheepishly, as he stamped a foot that was in a boot loaded with water, "but let's hurry on."

"What's the rush?" said Ike, "you're soaked anyway; it can't be any worse. Why not take along some of my dirt—maybe it might help you to fix a price you'd be willing to pay for the quarter-section—come on!"

"Not a bad idea, Atkins, not bad at all," said Lawrence, "but we'll do that tomorrow. Good night, Mr. Ellarson."

And then the two conspirators resumed their muddy march.

"Good night," shouted Ike as he pressed his heels into the mule's ribs and dashed into the cellar-like darkness.

In his cabin, after removing his wet clothes, Sawtooth Ike (otherwise Isaac Thomas Ellarson) made a fire in his grate, drew up a small table upon which he placed a lighted kerosene lamp, and then went to the windows, pulled down the bags he used as curtains and sat down. He chuckled as he opened a small treasure box that had been hidden in the bottom of an old flour barrel used for scraps of harness, and other discarded truck. From this box he took his papers from the Interior Department, showing by affidavit that he had complied with all the requirements of the Homestead laws, and was now the owner of Quarter Section 3, range 2w. s-w., Sec. 7, County of Gorton; that the title rested in Isaac Thomas Ellarson, and that it was flawless. Then

he put it back and chuckled some more as he spoke to himself, for "Lean Bacon" Johnson, his "pardner," as he called him, but who wasn't a partner at all, just a simple hand he had employed on the ranch, was at Baxter's and on the morrow he would sleep all day. It didn't matter to Ike, for, while he paid him a nominal sum to do chores, Ike wanted him mostly for company. But Ike was glad to be alone at this time because he wanted to do just what he had begun to do with no other pair of eyes looking on.

Next to come out of the treasure-box was a photograph of a fairly good-looking young woman. Ellarson looked at this picture with a steady gaze for a full minute, then putting it back he said, half aloud:

"It has been a long pull with me, but I've played the waiting game—and won! Any other way would have meant certain failure, and Quarter Section 3 would now be in the hands of the irrigation outfit, or the combination they represent. I *had to* live this self-imposed sentence under cover of a bewhiskered face, the assumed conduct of an ignoramus, and make myself more or less a subject for harmless ridicule. It was my only salvation. Staying here all this time as an intelligent man would have roused suspicion, of course; I knew that, and consequently. . . . But oh, joy, they found the ore and it's going to

go to assay about as quick as they can get it there; and by the time the railroad is into the valley we will be erecting our shaft-houses and have a few hundred men at work dredging this stuff, for it will be open mining. Glad they found it, though I believe it was a surprise to them, for as far as I have prospected there isn't an ounce of iron ore within the area of the water project or across the big gully—it's all on 3 and 4, as near as I can judge. I must play out this game."

The thought of Emily Milton meant another examination of the photograph, and this time when it was put back in the treasure-box Sawtooth Ike did something that if seen by the gang at Baxter's would have caused a riot of laughter and ridicule. He actually kissed it!

Poor Sawtooth—none loved him in this valley, for he was none too companionable. The few women in the scattered settlements knew him only as an odd character who was also a confirmed bachelor and a reputed woman-hater.

At one time after the completion of the main canal, when an irrigation mass meeting was being held, and Mrs. Abigail Thornton, widow of Edward Thornton, and owner of quarter-section 4, attempted to have something to say in favor of locating a branch of the main ditch two thousand yards farther toward the east ridge—a thing that Ike was opposing with all his might and main—

she stopped in the midst of a sentence, turned toward Ike and said:

"Ike Ellarson, when you whisper you speak louder than you do on ordinary occasions; if a threshing machine had been running I could have heard what you just said to Mr. Claxton. I'm a property-owner and interested in this project, and whether the man you whispered to, or you, either, believe it or not I am going to be a beneficiary of this improvement; so keep your eyes open, and unless you want to talk straight out in meeting I'd advise you to keep your mouth shut."

Ike flushed under his scraggly beard; none saw it, but he felt it. However, he slowly arose and said:

"The lady, who is a near neighbor of mine, is mistaken if she thinks for a minute that I intended any offense by whispering to 'Mud' Claxton, and I'm sorry I whispered so loud. I did say, because I've heard someone say it—'beware of widders'; and I also said 'women are all right in their place, but this is no place for women.' Now I want to apologize to Mrs. Thornton and to the meeting, and while I'm about it will add that some day I'll bring to the population of Sawtooth Valley the finest woman that lives on God's footstool and she'll be my wife. Somehow the idea has grown hereabouts that I'm a woman hater. But I forgive everyone who has ever

charged me with it and promise on my sacred word of honor to prove what I say inside of one year. In the meantime I want to say to Mrs. Thornton publicly that when all the cards have been played in this irrigation scheme she will come to Sawtooth Ike, hold out her hand and say 'shake, Mr. Ellarson,' and I'll shake. Perhaps she will say 'I always thought you were a sort of freak and a lazy loafer, but now I know that things are not always what they appear to be.' "

When Ike resumed his seat there was a silence of several moments. His entire manner—his attitude, as well as speech—seemed to have changed. The thought that ran through the minds of those in the small gathering was: What a strange man; all of a sudden he appears to be someone else; with a clean-shaven face and hair trimmed and a change of clothing he might be taken for a lawyer. At least this was what was discussed after the meeting broke up. As for the Widow Thornton, she was the first to speak and quickly accepted in a neat little speech the gentlemanly apology and explanation, saying that both she and others of the community had no doubt deeply wronged Mr. Ellarson in making their estimates of him; so far as she was concerned, she said, she admitted having discussed him with others, and that she had come to the conclusion that he was an easy-going but honest citizen,

perhaps a bit prejudiced, for some reason, against women, but that no doubt he had "a good imaginative reason for it." However, she concluded, no one had yet been able to convince her that the ditch should not cross at least twenty acres of her one hundred and sixty.

Thus it will be noted that Isaac Ellarson momentarily forgot the part he was playing; but it is hard for a real gentleman to hide his breeding. He was terribly worried about it, and fearful that he had finally, and at a critical time, come out from cover. It had been hard, when the Langworthy, the Harper and the Stetson families had come from Massachusetts for Ike to be a boor, for he was thrown into their company more than once, and when he met the ladies of these families—women of a certain amount of down east refinement and good breeding—he hadn't even raised his hat! It was a hard job, but with the exception related, Ellarson had been on guard.

To have appeared natural, as he was when he left New York, would have meant the creation of suspicion, for when either well-dressed and well-spoken men showed up in the new country, and appeared to be out of place in the rough work of improvement and upbuilding, the honest settler always became suspicious, and made up his mind that there was something going on that

wasn't entirely to the advantage of all hands—perhaps the "gent" was a mining expert, the representative of a mining, land or cattle syndicate with a consolidation trick up his sleeve; or perhaps he was a railroad representative sent ahead to be on the ground and ready to grab everything in sight. However, beyond creating the impression that Ike had suddenly become remorseful for his continued disagreement with the owner of Quarter Section 4, the incident resulted in no damage to his cause; as a matter of fact, it helped him, especially with Mrs. Thornton, who remarked a few days later that "after all, Sawtooth is not a bad sort; but he's queer, and I can't understand why he is so foolish as to oppose a canal above our quarter-sections, for I'm sure the soil is nearly as good as it is across the ravine and farther down the valley."

When Isaac Thomas Ellarson left New York for the West he was a well-preserved man of twenty-eight, temperate in his habits, weighed about one hundred and sixty-five pounds, and athletic. At his home and in college he was looked upon as a young man of promise, though inclined rather to playing billiards or sailing a cat-boat than to study, and he missed many of the lessons and lectures he required. However, he passed his examinations, and wrote a thesis

on municipal government and taxation that won him much commendation from his tutors. He was, while at Cambridge, classified with the "wild young set," and frequently got into trouble, once or twice with the police, but for no serious offense. On his return from college to New York he was variously employed in a large crockery establishment, and by a firm of mattress manufacturers. He saved his money. His parents were not well-to-do, though highly respectable, being descendants of an early-day family in Bronxville.

Young Ellarson had a keen eye and a habit of apparently looking with a searching, deep gaze upon anyone with whom he conversed, especially when the subject under discussion was interesting or important. His eyes were black, and hair almost a jet. His jaw was firm, nose inclined to be Roman—just slightly—and his mouth and chin denoted firmness of character, the chin being wide and protruding. Altogether, he was a fine-looking, broad-shouldered, well set-up man, and one who in a city would attract more than a glance. He was at the time of which I write—when he started for the West—a modest, soft-spoken man, but capable of a fight if cornered, though he usually avoided conflict whenever it seemed imminent. This phase of his character was noted even in school days, though he did

participate in some pretty lively escapades before he graduated and settled down to the sober affairs of the world. He was ambitious and anxious to be not only a man of wealth but of good reputation and influence. Poverty, however, was his lot, if this could be said of a man having, as he did, $2,500 in cash when he reached Sawtooth Valley. Anyway, he was considered poor by his New York friends, most of whom were wealthy.

Mrs. Abigail Thornton, widow of Edward Thornton, a Massachusetts merchant, came with her husband and one child, a boy, to Sawtooth Valley a year before Ellarson arrived. Thornton was threatened with tuberculosis, and was told that his only hope was in an out-of-door life in the West. He took up a homestead in the Valley, invested his money in cattle and a few horses, and made an attempt to farm a piece of land in the bottoms with indifferent success. He then tried the "dry farm" system on the uplands, and failed. Another boy was born a year before the father died as the result of an accident which befell him while making a trip to Bordertown, a fractious horse running away and throwing him out upon a rock.

Mrs. Thornton, a woman of great natural resources, immediately took charge of the ranch and conducted its affairs until the great changes in her life began, as recounted in this story. She

was the one woman in the valley settlement to whom everyone looked for leadership and advice. She was young, barely thirty, a well-educated and well-bred person. Before her marriage she taught school near Stockbridge, Massachusetts, after a normal course. She was a woman of engaging manners, and able to attend to her home affairs and still give liberally of her time to public business.

CHAPTER II

NEAR DEATH IN THE MOUNTAINS

Things moved along quietly for a week after the irrigation meeting and Ike heard nothing from Lawrence or Atkins. It gave him no uneasiness, for he was sure they had gone over the range to Royaltown or on to Denver to visit an assayer with his samples of ore, and that sooner or later would be back with a report stating that the ore was a high-grade Bessemer—a quality containing little or no phosphorus, hence especially suited for use in the Bessemer process of steel making, a system for eliminating the carbon and silicon from pig iron.

While Atkins was away Ellarson spent several evenings with his treasure-box, and among other things he took out of it and examined with the enthusiasm of a miser was an assay of the same ore that he had had made in Denver soon after he dug the postholes.

Isaac Ellarson was no longer a tenderfoot; he had easily adapted himself to his environment, its customs and climate. He had for a while lived in a dugout and after taking up his 160-acre tract

spent much of his time with a Winchester over his shoulder rambling up and down the then wild and uninhabited valleys of the Sawtooth range. Game was plentiful, too, and Ellarson could shoot well from the start, for he had been a member of a gun club in the East, and was also handy with a six-shooter. No one bothered about him, for he bothered himself—apparently—about no one. It was easy for him to live along, and gradually, as the settlers began to come in, become in this time a pioneer, and he was so regarded. None was interested in where he came from or who he was—he was just Sawtooth Ike to everybody in the neighborhood. But away back in the white-collar country there were a number of persons who kept him constantly in mind, including Emily, and they wrote to him and he answered their letters, tramping across the range at first afoot and later on mule-back, to Bordertown, the nearest postoffice on the B. & L. stageline, for his mail. The railroad was sixty miles away, at Buckhorn. Naturally, there was more or less curiosity, especially on the part of the postmaster at Bordertown in regard to Sawtooth Ike; but it isn't the custom of that country to pry too deeply into the private affairs of any man so long as the man behaves himself and keeps his own counsel, allowing others to possess their secrets without disturbance.

"He may be a jail-bird," said Postmaster Durr to his clerk, "but I'm no sheriff, and it's none o' my affair; he minds his own business, pays cash for what he buys at the store, and is never in liquor—no, I think he's disappointed in love, or some poor cuss that nobody ever did love."

Ike's stays were short in Bordertown where he bought everything he needed except when pressed for time; then he patronized old Two-Pair Franklin who had a stock of merchandise in a log house at the mouth of Mountain Creek that included everything from barbed wire down to tobacco. But Two-Pair's clothing and canned goods had been in the valley ever since the last Indian tepee was trailed off behind a cayuse to the reservation one hundred miles away. It was what the settlers called a "trader stock," and most of them avoided patronizing Franklin except when they wanted to win overalls, suspenders or something of the kind; then they engaged him in a game of freeze-out poker. Two-Pair Franklin acquired his sobriquet in numerous transactions of the kind, and several Sawtoothites boasted that they never paid cash for anything Two-Pair had in stock if they wanted it. Nevertheless it is related of Franklin that he originally won the log house, and the stock on hand on a pair of deuces and a pair of treys, his opponent having a nine-spot high.

ke fried his bacon, boiled his coffee and made own bread, bringing these things in over a trail on the back of the mule he called old dy.

)ne day shortly after the midnight meeting h Lawrence and Atkins Ike discovered that needed bacon and flour, so he saddled old dy and rode up the valley on his way to Bortown. He had acquired the habit, due to the t that he was without a confidant, of talking himself; and on this trip he was particularly ıble, and when he wasn't talking he was ckling.

'Another month," he would say, "and I'll be dy for a section in a sleeper, and will be speed- for New York."

t was just as he uttered this about the tenth e that the report of a rifle rang out, echoing m bluff to bluff back and forth across the yon. Isaac Ellarson fell from old Baldy into ump of bushes beside the narrow path; a little let of crimson streamed down his cheek. A et had torn clean through his jaw left to ıt, taking a couple of teeth with it and for a nent putting him *hors de combat*. Slowly, he v his hand across his face, which seemed to aralyzed, but he arose quickly in the bushes. minute his head showed there was another report, but the shot missed, crashing through

the brush. Old Baldy snorted, ran up the trail, and then walked back.

After the last shot, Ike thought of his revolver, and took it from his scabbard. He was now suffering great pain and was nearly blind in his left eye, but he could see smoke rise from a clump of aspens across the little stream bordering the trail. It vanished quickly. Then there was a clattering of falling rock or boulders, and Ike made up his mind that his would-be murderer was coming down from his hiding place to view the results of his marksmanship, and perhaps put a finishing touch to the record. And he was right, for in a moment there came into view on the edge of the creek the form of a man, but he couldn't see him distinctly. However, he never reached Sawtooth Ike. Blinded as he was Ike took deliberate aim at what appeared to him a mere shadow, and fired. He couldn't see the result, but heard a woman's scream, and in another moment Mrs. Abigail Thornton was at his side.

"You poor man," she said, as she hitched her broncho to a tree. "Why *did* he do this?" She then insisted that Ike lie down and remain quiet while she went to the creek to dampen her handkerchief.

"Don't—please don't expose yourself; he—whoever he is—may begin firing again; sit down,

Mrs. Thornton, sit down—quick!" Ike fairly shouted, although it forced a groan from him that he tried to restrain.

"But don't you know you've killed him—Lean Bacon Johnson, I mean?"

"Lean—my God, woman, you don't mean to say it was Johnson? That you saw him shoot, and that my shot took effect?"

"I mean just that, Mr. Ellarson, for as I rounded the bend after the scoundrel's second shot was fired I saw him plainly; first he was half-concealed behind a big brown rock; and then I saw you stagger and fire. Both of you were in plain sight, for he emerged in full view, and I saw Johnson's arms rise over his head, one holding a rifle; and then he plunged headlong over the cliff into the creek bottom. . . . You lie down till I come back with some water soaked in my 'kerchief——"

And she sped away, soon returning with an old leaky tomato can she had found and filled with cool spring water. "Yes," she said, "Johnson is down on the gravel-bed dead as a doornail. . . . What in the name of goodness did he try to kill *you* for?"

Ike was silent for two reasons; in the first place he was bleeding freely, his head swam, and with what little reasoning power he had left he



began to believe his wound was fatal; secondly, the effort to speak was growing more painful. But he finally mumbled:

"Don't know—guess I'm done for."

"No, you're not," said Mrs. Thornton, dipping her handkerchief into the water and wiping the blood from Ike's face. "But it's fortunate I came along just as I did with my little broncho. Your mule is steady and you are going to mount him and ride back to the valley; it's only four miles and downhill all the way. I'll ride beside you."

And with this she steadied the now weakened, pale man, guiding him to old Baldy.

"Can you mount him?" asked Mrs. Thornton, as she saw him hesitate.

"Yes," replied Ike with evident great pain, "but I must take a look over the embankment," and then going across the trail he looked down into the creek bottom, Mrs. Thornton steadying him as he walked.

Ike put his hands over his eyes when he saw sprawled face downward the victim of his almost random aim.

"Yes," he mumbled, "I guess it *is* Lean Bacon. Poor fellow; why—did—he try to—kill me? . . . First I thought I had shot you. . . . Sure it's Lean?"

"Oh, yes, it's Lean—Lean Bacon Johnson."

Ike's articulation was almost unintelligible, and both difficult and painful. Mrs. Thornton, noting this, said nothing for some time that would require an answer; but she was none of the fainting or hysterical kind. She had been reared in the East, too, but had lived in the sagebrush country long enough to acquire a good deal of its ways and mode of living. When she came to the valley she had lived in a dugout with her husband, then advanced to the log shack stage, and now was the matron of a home built of sawed lumber with plastered walls and a comfortable and unique fireplace made of boulders that had been fashioned by her own and her husband's hands. She owned several horses, thirty cows, a few sheep, chickens, etc. It had been a hard task to keep things going after her husband's death, and she was—or thought so, at least—dependent for the future upon the water from the irrigation ditch, and believed that without the branch canal above or across the lower part of her quarter-section that it was only a question of time when she must sell her claim, return to the East or try some other community. She was, in fact, at this very time, trailing a stray cow, for she had but little help on her homestead.

The mule and cayuse traveled most of the way

down the mountain trail side by side. Two or three times Sawtooth Ike attempted to speak, and once succeeded in saying quite plainly:

"Mrs. Thornton, God bless you—you're a good woman; but—I feel that this wound is fatal. Glad I didn't mistake *you* for an assassin."

And while his rescuer noted that there was a deadly pallor on his face, and that he was only just able to stay on the back of the mule by hanging to the pommel of the saddle with both hands, allowing his mount to move along without use of the bridle reins, she assumed a confident air and appearance and assured Ike that he was all right.

"Your wound is not in a fatal spot, though it couldn't possibly have caused more pain had it been made almost anywhere else. You are, of course, in agony, and I know you are terribly weak. Another mile and we will be at my home, and while there is no real doctor in the valley we have Sorensen, the Swedish veterinarian, and you know he can do a lot for a human being with his liniments, absorbent cotton, gauze and antiseptics."

Ike nodded and seemed to brace up, for he finally grabbed up the bridle rein and urged old Baldy to hasten along; in fact, he soon led the little cavalcade down into the meadows, and in a few jumps was at the Thornton doorway. He

bled freely, and old Baldy's fore-quarters were soaked to his fetlocks. Ike was very weak and had to be helped into the house.

Lying in a neat bed of white sheets and blankets three days later, with head bandaged so that only the eyes were visible, surrounded by Mrs. Thornton, her two young sons and three or four neighbors, Isaac Thomas Ellarson was, to all appearances, breathing his last. Sorensen was there, sober-faced, and at his side Dr. Martin who had come over the range from Buckhorn upon the request of Mrs. Thornton who had sent a messenger for him. He had just arrived.

"I'm afraid," said the doctor in a whisper, "that you called me too late; but I hope not. Blood poisoning has set in, but I'm sure I can stop its spreading. His heart seems weak."

The night wore on to the early hours of morning, when Ellarson, reaching out a hand from under the sheets, tore away the bandages and sat up.

"Doctor," he said, "if I'm going to die, which I strongly suspect, I've got a lot of things to do and say before I go. Call Mrs. Thornton—no one else—and pardon me, for I've no desire to be rude to you—but will you please leave the room for fifteen minutes?"

This was said with great difficulty, but plainly. The swelling seemed at least not to be increasing,

though the wound had caused a discoloration and swelling that made Sawtooth Ike look like almost anything but himself.

The doctor, far from being startled by this turn in affairs, seemed pleased. "Surely, I'll call Mrs. Thornton and go outside and stay until sent for. That's all right; you are articulating much better, and show a wonderful improvement." Then he called Mrs. Thornton who was at the bedside in a few minutes.

Deputy Sheriff Miller and a posse was sent out into the canyon with a light democrat wagon to bring in the body of Lean Bacon Johnson. The coroner of Gorton county at Bordertown was summoned, but it was thought best to bring the body in rather than to guard it from the wolves, as was the practice, where the shooting occurred. Coroner Fuller arrived the next day, empaneled a jury and set to work. There was one silent witness—Mrs. Abigail Thornton—and when she was called to tell the story of the tragedy everything else in the Sawtooth Valley came to a dead stop, barring the running of the Flathead water over its new course. Even Baxter's gin mill, which had within a few months been converted into a "sarsaparilla pop parlor" by the passage of the state Prohibition law, was closed, and its thirsty habitués crowded the mud-

covered homesteaders and their families for positions of vantage in the tumbledown warehouse of the irrigation company.

Mrs. Thornton's tale was told in a simple manner, for there was no lawyer to interrupt and attempt to entangle her in contradictions. She saw the shooting, had identified Lean Bacon Johnson, saw him take aim and fire; saw Isaac Ellarson stagger up in the bushes and return his second shot; saw Lean Bacon plunge into the creek bottom, and had guided Ellarson down the canyon to her homestead, notified Deputy Sheriff Miller at Baxter's and sent for Dr. Martin. She gave, as nearly as she could remember, the conversation between herself and Ellarson both at the time of the shooting and after their arrival home—all except what he had said to her in private conversation. This she withheld because she was not asked by the coroner or anyone else if that was all. She simply said she knew of no trouble between Lean Bacon and Sawtooth Ike, and could not account for the shooting. "Certainly," she said, "Lean Bacon tried to kill Mr. Ellarson, and Mr. Ellarson shot and killed Lean Bacon in self-defense."

It developed during the inquest that Lean Bacon, in falling over the cliff, had slid at least part way down upon his face, lacerating it in a

terrible manner. The bullet from Sawtooth Ike's revolver had passed through his head squarely between the eyes.

Mr. Ellarson not being able to move from his bed the jury visited the Thornton home and looked at him; that was all. They saw very little and heard nothing, for Ike's head was a mass of bandages, little showing but his sunken eyes. The verdict was easy, and soon rendered——

"Lean Bacon Johnson died from a wound made by a bullet from a rifle fired by Isaac Thomas Ellarson in self-defense."

His body was buried by the coroner, in a side-hill on Mountain Creek, the only mourner being Baxter whose mourning totaled a bar bill of $4.50.

Everyone seemed satisfied, and hoped that Sawtooth Ike and his epigrams would soon be as familiar in the settlement as they had been; and almost everyone allowed that when it came to a show-down, according to Mrs. Thornton's told and retold story, Ike was some shot; and had a nerve that anyone in the valley might well feel proud of. But why did Lean Bacon, a man whom Sawtooth Ike had befriended, try to kill his benefactor? Ike had said there had been no trouble, and had stuck to this up to the time that Ike had concluded he was all in and about to pass

in his checks and close his earthly account. It began to leak out, too, that Ike had had a very private conference with Mrs. Thornton, and shortly the gossip changed from the part that Lean Bacon played in his own tragedy to the one now apparently being played by Mrs. Thornton. What did he tell her? The ex-gin mill was now the rendezvous of not only the ex-booze fighting members of the homesteaders' community, but of those who, in its palmy days, never crossed its threshold, even the women going there to buy the pop that Baxter sold with a sneer, which was thrown in without extra cost to the purchaser.

Sheriff Samuels, who had held the office off and on for ten years, beginning when "gun fights" were common, and who never had investigated a real mystery, was interested as never before. "In my first term," he said, "when a feller was shot I just found out what the other feller shot him for, and when I found out they were both heeled and both fired, I allowed that the man who got killed got what was comin'. But now it's different. These fellers never had a word, so far as I can learn, and even on the day o' the shootin' there was no row. Lean Bacon simply hid in the gulch and when Ike came along popped at him from behind a rock; but what for? Guess

I don't need any help to find out, and as there's no claim jumpin' or many papers to serve I'll go to the bottom o' this thing."

And he did. First, he visited Mr. Ellarson's home and put a padlock on the door, stationed a deputy at the Thornton home with instructions to interview Sawtooth Ike as soon as he was able to talk, but Ike ordered him off the place. The sheriff called on every citizen of the valley personally—not a big job, for all told, along the ten miles there were not more than one hundred, including children. He interviewed everyone, hoping to find a clue if such a thing existed, to the reason for the shooting. It was quite generally understood that Ike had no riches; that his property consisted largely of his mules, cattle and a poorly furnished home; no jewelry—not even a watch—and never flush with money, though he always had enough to pay his bills, and paid them.

But Samuels learned that Ike occasionally participated in the poker game at Baxter's; also that Lean Bacon was there when he had a few dollars, and the sheriff also learned that the only resource for income Lean Bacon had was Ellarson, from whom he received forty dollars a month, and rendered but little service in return. He also discovered that Lean Bacon had come into the valley from the south—he said from Colorado. He was thirty years of age, had been a sheep herder

in the southern tier of counties, was a fairly agreeable fellow, a little boastful of his ability to shoot and had intimated once when "feeling good" that on one occasion his shooting had caused him to retire from the sheep business for a term of five years. He gave no details, but the understanding had been at the time, on the part of those who heard his "whisky talk," that he was trying to be tough, and accumulate a reputation as a "bad man"—perhaps a six-gun who had been obliged to retire to a big stone house.

This was something, the sheriff thought, toward completing an obituary for Lean Bacon, but it added nothing to the effort being made to find out *why* he shot Ellarson.

By this time Ellarson had made up his mind that death was remote. He was moving about, and while the wound scarred both sides of his face it was healing rapidly. He still spoke with difficulty for the reason that Lean Bacon's bullet had ripped a hole through the roots of his tongue. He was ready for the sheriff when that officer, now playing his first hand at the detective business, showed up for an interview; in fact, Ike had sent for him and told him he was ready to help as far as he could, to solve the mystery.

Ike had left Mrs. Thornton's and now occupied his own home. Samuels entered the kitchen where Ike was frying his bacon and baking a pan

of baking powder biscuit in a Dutch oven on a heap of coals in the fireplace. Ike invited him to supper and during the meal, which Ike was now able to enjoy to some extent, the sheriff began to catechise his host. He asked every question he could think of, beginning back at the day when Ike picked up Lean Bacon and took him to his home and called him "pardner," though he was a hired hand.

Finally Ike said: "Now, Mr. Sheriff, do you know Atkins, the surveyor?"

"Yes, I do, quite well."

"Do you know a man named Lawrence, a stranger who came into this valley a few weeks ago?"

"No, I don't know Lawrence, but he's been mentioned to me."

"Well, I found Lawrence and Atkins on my claim one night during that whaling big thunderstorm, and they carried bags of dirt which they said they were taking as samples to give to some agricultural school to report on. It looked fishy to me at the time. Before this Lawrence asked me for a price on my quarter-section. Ask him, if you can find him, what he did with those samples, make him tell a straight story, and, if possible, show you the reports—*the assays.*"

"I'll do that," said Samuels, striking the table,

"and by Jove, it may be a clue. Do you think——"

"I don't think anything; if I do I don't say anything. I have no right to even insinuate that either Lawrence or Atkins know anything about why Lean Bacon waylaid me; it's up to you; if you think it worth while to follow this clue—if it is a clue—go ahead; I'm satisfied as it is, but am ready to prosecute any possible criminal who may have had a hand in the plot, and who has till now escaped."

Before Sheriff Samuels had spent a week on his investigation he discovered that both Lawrence and Atkins were in Denver, having gone there before the tragedy on the mountain trail. In a day or two, however, they both returned, and at Buckhorn, where they left the train, they heard all about it, and expressed deep interest in Sawtooth Ike's condition. They really had intended to go on to Bordertown and remain overnight and make an early start by the regular trail that would take them past the scene of the tragedy; but they were so anxious to reach the valley and learn the details that they began the trip of sixty miles by a new route, just opened, in Buckhorn's first and only automobile at seven o'clock in the evening. But it was in mid-July and the nights were clear with a good moon, and they landed at

Baxter's by two the next morning just as the poker game was breaking up.

The "Lima Bean Poker Club" had a new player —Sheriff Samuels—and he with the rest of the members, was standing out in front discussing the Lean Bacon-Ike Sawtooth tragedy.

"By George," shouted Baxter, as he saw the oncoming automobile, and heard the whirr of its engine, "if here ain't the first auto that ever came into this valley, and George Coon is driving it! And he's got Atkins and that city feller; wouldn't be more surprised if I saw a railroad engine steaming in."

"We've had some trip," said George as he stopped his car in front of Baxter's, addressing the gang, "but it beats a trail over the range—don't it, gents?"—addressing his passengers.

"It sure does," replied Atkins, "even if we did bump the bumps most of the way across the sod; but every creek is bridged, and it's bound to be a popular route in and out."

When railroads are built into new countries it is after they have been mapped and surveyed several times. Sometimes these surveys are completed and work begun before small individual landowners have heard anything about it. Surveying crews are sent out and if encountered and questioned by the settlers the surveyors tell them they are running a line to re-establish a state or

a county border. Before anyone who is not in the secret knows what is going on the route is not only established but town-sites chosen, usually after very careful examinations, surveys, etc. Then, as happened when one continental line was built from the Mississippi Valley to the Pacific, those who are back of the project, and their friends, buy the land cheaply, lay out the acres into town lots and make fortunes.

When Lawrence came to the Sawtooth country he came as the secret representative of big financial interests, not those backing a certain big railroad project, but who had their eyes on the valley. The Sawtooth Valley had been chosen as a division town where, it was proposed, to erect large car shops and a considerable yard for cars. Besides this east and west line the company proposed to build feeders, one of which would traverse the Sawtooth, connecting with the B. M. L. & J. at Buckhorn. This, in fact, meant two railroads in and out of the valley. And up to the time of the return of Lawrence and Atkins there hadn't been a lisp of it in the settlement, for none there knew anything about it with the single exception of Isaac Thomas Ellarson, who through his influential Eastern connections had been advised to locate quietly in the valley, and await events. These events were slow about shaping themselves out and developing, but during Ellar-

son's last year of watching and waiting much had occurred to convince him that he was to be well rewarded for his patience—better, in fact, than he had originally anticipated. He had homesteaded the center and circumference of the site of what was to be Sawtooth City according to the drawings he had scanned in company with his brother-in-law, Simeon Hamilton, head of the firm of Hamilton & Swain, promoters, of 21 Liberty street, New York, in a private room at the Lawyers' Club nearly ten years before; and it was understood, of course, when Ellarson left New York for the West to win a fortune before he could wed Emily Milton, daughter of Banker George Milton, that Ellarson was to share fifty-fifty with the firm in whatever profits resulted from the location of the townsite. Old Milton was a hard-headed man, very fond of Ellarson and hopeful of his success when he told him firmly that before he would consent to the marriage with his daughter, Ellarson must be worth at least $100,000.

Thus it came about that Ellarson took Greeley's advice. But he never dreamed when he filed on this quarter-section that it was mineral, and neither did the government. Now, it appeared to him, a greater fortune than he had imagined in his fondest day-dreams was in his grasp. And since he had quite recovered from his wound he

had begun to throw off his disguise and appeared serious and boldly faced the gossipers who had begun to question him about the metamorphosis. It was openly stated—and it came to his ears—that he and Lawrence and Atkins were all of the same stripe and were probably, as Baxter expressed it, "in cahoots," notwithstanding a story equally as plausible was current that they were, on the other hand, mortal enemies, and that Ike suspected Lawrence and Atkins of being responsible for the permanent disfigurement of his face.

Then there was the story freely told by Dr. Martin, the rough and unethical physician of Buckhorn, about being asked to leave the room while Ellarson and Mrs. Thornton had a private chat. As the old doctor told it, "Ellarson believed he was about ready to pass in his chips, and politely asked me to go out and look at the new moon, and I went."

The horse doctor—Sorensen—added considerably to this story by disclosing the fact that just before Dr. Martin came into the case he, Sorensen, had been asked by Ellarson to go to his cabin and bring to the sick-bed in Abigail Thornton's house "a whole barrelful of truck," including Ike's private papers, which he did by crawling through a window.

"Accidentally," said Sorensen to Baxter, "and with no idea at all of prying into Ike's affairs, I

saw letters from a gal back East, some from a New York broker, and documents from an assayer. Ike is a sly boy—he's prospecting and has a sweetheart. But the main thing was a letter—I just glanced at it coming over the trail—from the broker. Ike's land ain't never goin' to be no farm! More than this I'm keepin' still about —see?"

But what worried the gang at Baxter's more than anything else was the "private session," as they called it, between Ike and the widow.

On top of all this, and while the discussion was getting warm and free, a Denver newspaper came to hand containing several columns of news, illustrated by maps, about a new railroad which was to cover several hundred miles of practically undeveloped territory, running east and west, including the Sawtooth range and valley, together with a sixty-mile spur to connect with Buckhorn. The map and article similar to all promotion literature of the kind, gave minute particulars, especially the townsites and descriptive matter concerning them. One of these, dwelt upon by the writer to the extent of a quarter of a column, was about the City of Sawtooth, "located in the richest undeveloped agricultural valley in the West, and within sight of a range of mountains rich in gold, silver and other precious metals." This townsite, it was announced, covered a sec-

tion of land—six hundred and forty acres—and was numbered 7.

A hasty examination of homesteaders' papers resulted on the part of everyone in the valley, and a comparison of the Denver paper's text and map demonstrated the startling fact that quarter-sections 3 and 4, owned respectively by Isaac Thomas Ellarson and Mrs. Abigail Thornton, had been chosen as the sites of the railroad station, switch yards, car shops, roundhouse, and about everything else.

So Ike Ellarson and Abigail Thornton also instantly became the center of interest in the newest sensation. Had they known about this all the time? And was this the secret? Sometimes the discussion grew lively, and Ike especially came in for some pretty close questioning; but he maintained almost absolute silence. He was glad a railroad was coming, he said, of course, but would neither admit nor deny a previous knowledge of the project.

After a month of more or less excited discussion, during which it developed that Lawrence, who had no connection with the real projectors of the new railroad or town site, had tried to buy Ellarson's land, first offering $10,000 and finally increasing his bid to $50,000. Ellarson never mentioned the "samples" taken by Lawrence and Atkins; neither did they. But Sheriff Samuels

had quizzed them the morning they returned from Denver, without much satisfaction. He told them he knew about their midnight excursion, the gathering up of the dirt and taking it to Denver for analysis. Moreover, he had questioned them about their acquaintanceship with Lean Bacon Johnson. Lawrence had never met him, he said, and it was the truth. Atkins said he had never spoken a word to Lean Bacon in his life; that he didn't know him even by sight, whereupon Sheriff Samuels said he purposed to show that Atkins and Lean Bacon had been acquainted before either came to the Valley, and that he (Atkins) had better think the matter over. "Lean Bacon shot Sawtooth Ike," he said, "and there never was a row between 'em. We want to know why Lean Bacon did that shootin'—he didn't do it on his own account; he was hired by someone who wanted to put Ike out o' the way."

"Do you mean to insinuate I have a guilty knowledge of this crime?" exclaimed Atkins.

"Yes, there's strong suspicion because you lie when you say you didn't know Lean Bacon! Why, you sat in a game with him at Baxter's and staked him when he went broke!"

"Well, if I did I've forgotten about it and about him."

"And you knew him at Fort Allen, didn't you?"

"No, I never set foot in Fort Allen."

"That's strange—I found a letter in Sawtooth Ike's cabin, written to E. J. Johnson, signed Charles P. Atkins, and dated Fort Allen. Lean Bacon's right name was Edward J. Johnson, and yours is Charles P. Atkins."

Producing the letter he showed it to Atkins, saying:

"Is that your handwritin'?"

"It is not," replied Atkins, after a careful perusal, "and I never saw it before."

The letter, written in a fairly good business hand, after referring to a former acquaintanceship at some place that seemed to be rather obscure, told Johnson that "I am sure you don't know it, but the man you are working for is wealthy, and I think he has a *cache* of a lot of money in his cabin—go to it. I'll meet you in Buckhorn any time you want to talk business about this. I saw Ellarson in Buckhorn a few days ago, and he cashed a number of checks at the bank."

"I'm not a-goin' to arrest you, Atkins—not now—but you stay in this valley and don't leave it till I tell you to—understand? This thing has got to be cleared up. Someone, signin' your name, and it looks like your writin', for I've compared it, wanted Lean Bacon to rob Sawtooth

Ike, and was ready to meet him and plan the job. I found the letter in an old pair of pants of Lean Bacon's."

After more protests of innocence on the part of Atkins, and during which most of the regular gang at Baxter's stood open-mouthed, Lawrence and Atkins departed to the old irrigation camp, and talked over the new situation.

"The fact that we want this Ellarson land, and as much as we can get of the quarter-section adjoining, is going to add to the circumstantial evidence the sheriff has got," said Atkins to Lawrence. "Fort Allen! Well, I'll be blowed! Never heard of it, but by George I'm afraid I did play in a game of poker that skunk sat in; and perhaps I staked him; I've done that so often while trying to pass the dreary hours in this dreary place that I wouldn't be surprised if the old sheriff could prove that every settler in the valley who has sat in the game owes me money. I've prevented a break-up of many a game in this way. And that namesake must be a regular crook."

It was soon a matter of common gossip everywhere from one end of the valley to the other that Atkins, if not Lawrence, had some guilty knowledge of the shooting of Sawtooth Ike.

Within a week there came in over the new auto trail a half dozen automobiles loaded with

well-dressed men; three trucks and two or three dozen workingmen in wagons—the advance guard of the oncoming railroad. These were followed a few days later by a procession of automobiles and more trucks with almost ready-to-live-in houses. Some of these were consigned to "Isaac T. Ellarson, Sawtooth City."

CHAPTER III

BEGINNING OF ELLARSON'S FORTUNE

Before the rush, however, Ike and Abigail had arranged in Mrs. Thornton's house the first real society event in Sawtooth City. The invited guests all responded and included Theodore M. Burton, Edward J. Lawrence, Charles P. Atkins, Sheriff Samuels, Deputy Sheriff Miller, Coroner Fuller; every member of the Langworthy, Stetson and Harper families; "Mud" Claxton, and even "Pete" Baxter. There were others. Everyone was surprised to see everyone else. The sheriff scowled at Atkins, and Atkins looked and acted uncomfortable. Mrs. Thornton was wreathed in smiles; so was Sawtooth Ike, though he never will smile as he once did on account of the wounds on either cheek; but Mrs. Thornton, after Ike had shaved off his beard, insisted that the bullet made the finest pair of dimples she ever saw on a man's face.

The table was spread and ready by the time the last puzzled guest arrived. So Mrs. Thornton, noting the sharp glances cast back and forth

between the sheriff and Atkins, hastened to start the program. But the sheriff smiled once or twice.

"Ladies and gentlemen," she said, "please take seats at the table. Mr. Isaac Thomas Ellarson will sit at the head, and I shall take a seat at his right."

The rest were then seated by the host and hostess, after which Mrs. Thornton arose and said:

"We have invited you here this evening to help us celebrate an important and unusual event in our lives, and I believe, in the life of every human being in this valley, which bids fair to be a seething population in a few months—especially quarter-sections 3 and 4, in Section 7, range 2 W, owned in fee simple and jointly by Isaac Thomas Ellarson and Abigail Thornton, who have formed a real estate partnership to be known as the Ellarson-Thornton Sawtooth Townsite Corporation. Fifty per cent of the stock is held by us and fifty per cent by the firm of Hamilton & Swain of New York, brokers and railroad promoters. Mr. Ellarson will now address you."

"Neighbors and friends," said Mr. Ellarson, as he arose and grasped the back of a chair, drawing it from the table, bending it over and leaning against it, "so many things are crowding my mind —some cheerful and others sad—that I hesitate to begin. First, however, I want to say that at a

public meeting a few months ago during which I was rebuked for making a remark that seemed to confirm a settled opinion in this community that I was a woman-hater, I stated that within a year I would bring to this valley as my wife the finest woman in the world. This is the sad part of the story I must tell you. The lady I *then* referred to died in London of pneumonia, the very day that I was shot by a stranger in yonder canyon. Yes, neighbors, he *was* a stranger in these parts—not Lean Bacon Johnson as we all thought, and were right in thinking, when Mrs. Thornton gave her testimony at the coroner's inquest. Johnson is alive and well and working on a ranch, seventy miles east, and will be back in the valley in the course of time; I've seen him, talked to him, shaken hands with him. He left here, he says, as he came. In his words, 'I came without bein' invited and I left the same way.' Coroner Fuller, who is with us, has established these facts beyond a doubt, and is satisfied. So is Sheriff Samuels. So am I. So is Mrs. Thornton. Lean Bacon is just one of hundreds—a man with a bad record. But he is trying to live right. Suspicion pointed to him, and it was natural. Let us give him a chance.

"Lean explained everything to me in a satisfactory manner. I slipped away a few days ago

with the sheriff, who had a tip from a former valley man—a member of the Lima Bean Poker Club—that Lean was working at Bull River. Lean admitted frankly that some years ago he had been in prison for a short term, for manslaughter; that a prison acquaintance was a man serving a sentence under the name of Charles P. Atkins, a sheep-herder and an ex-cattle rustler. Lean told me that when he was discharged he had left prison the same day that this man Atkins completed his sentence, and that for a few days they traveled together. He was afraid of Atkins and left him at Buckhorn, saying he was going to Bordertown, which he did. Later Atkins came to Bordertown and there met Lean. Lean was foolish enough to tell him he was living with me. Later on Atkins saw me at the Buckhorn post-office and bank and concluded I was a rich man and would be an easy victim if he could induce Lean to join him in a highway robbery or just common burglary job.

"But Lean Bacon Johnson, while handy with a gun, and inclined to use it recklessly, is no thief, and he refused. Then Atkins undertook to play a lone hand and gather in my supposed wealth. You know the rest, except this:

"Lean Bacon Johnson, as he explained things to me, feared that this Atkins would continue to

annoy him, so he simply disappeared, as he explains it, going away as he came, without an invitation.

"You will remember that the body of the man who shot me—the man I killed with a wild and random shot—never was thoroughly identified as that of Lean Bacon Johnson. His face was nearly obliterated by his slide down the embankment; but his clothing was similar to one of the old suits worn by Lean—a suit given to prisoners when they go out into the world. And Atkins was similar in build and general appearance; therefore it is not so strange that Mrs. Thornton should identify the would-be assassin as Lean Bacon, or that the conclusion should have been reached by everyone that the body buried on a sidehill near Mountain Creek was that of Lean, for Lean's decision to disappear occurred just at this time. However, I have indisputable proof in the payrolls of a section foreman on the B. M. L. & J. west of Buckhorn that Lean came to him and was put to work several hours before the tragedy occurred, and worked a week, then disappearing, so he was not with the would-be assassin. I had missed Lean for several days before I started across the range, but thought nothing of it, for he frequently absented himself in this way, going to the ranches of acquaintances where,

as he explained it one time, 'they played poor poker, had a bottle, and a change of grub.'

"And now, my friends, let me dwell briefly upon one or two very personal matters. A long time ago in digging a few postholes on my land I found some ore I took to be iron. It *is* iron—the very best in the world—but there isn't enough on my quarter-section, or in this valley, to make a car-load of pig iron. I have for several weeks had an exploring expert at work trying to trace a vein. There is none—only a pocket. Doubtless there is plenty of iron in the hills, but none in this valley. My expert is no less person than a classmate of mine in Harvard—Theodore M. Burton, the stranger who sits at my left, and whom I take pleasure in introducing to you.

"Mr. Lawrence offered me $50,000 for my land, but it was because of two things, principally the belief he held that it was rich in mineral. If I sold it to him upon the strength of the assay he got in Denver I would have swindled him; if I sold it to him because he had advance information (as I did) that the railroad was coming and that my land and Mrs. Thornton's land would be the business and manufacturing center of a big city, I would have swindled myself and Mrs. Thornton!

"We have both concluded that, after all, there

is no happiness in getting, only in giving; and by happiness is meant the complement of all the pleasures of which we are susceptible. While this philosophy is not metaphysically straight we are going to straighten it. Both of us have been terribly worried about that ore; it doesn't worry us any more. We shall have enough to make us comfortable from the sale of our town lots—not at boom prices—but within reason, for we shall have happiness only as we deserve the respect of our neighbors. Believing that happiness is attainable by giving and not by grabbing everything within our sight that we can control, we have this day set aside fifty acres of our land, some for the use of churches, hospitals, a park and two cemeteries. And if there is anything we have overlooked we are prepared to consider any other benefactions we are able to bestow either upon the city of Sawtooth and its fast growing population, or upon worthy individuals.

"I confess that for ten years I dreamed of vast golden riches, especially of late after I found the iron ore in my postholes; and when, at the time I disclosed my secret to Mrs. Thornton and asked her to be my executor, believing that death was near at hand, she shared my hopes and promised to represent me. It would, I believed, make her the richest woman in the state, and so did she. But since my life has been spared, and we have

talked the matter over, we have concluded that for real happiness there is something better than gold.

"Happiness in the full sense is spiritual and mental. The common view is that it comes from the gratification of a desire; but happiness, to us at least, is something more substantial and serene than pleasure resulting from the satisfaction of desire—especially of riches represented in money or other tangible property. We have discovered nothing new, for it is well known that the immensely rich in this world's goods have no monopoly of happiness. I believe, in truth, they have less of it than those who have a modest accumulation, a home and the love and respect of their neighbors.

"I spent ten good years of my life in a manner that makes me somewhat ashamed; and it is no excuse for me to say that others have done it in eons of years past and still others are doing it. I made sacrifices that caused me pain and suffering—practiced some deceit—all for money.

"If I had not been shot and thus suddenly brought close to death, I doubt if I should have come to my senses. But the ways of the Lord are many, and frequently life's lessons are learned as we least expect to learn them.

"My early teachings were forgotten and neglected as soon as I came to this valley, for I

came with but one idea in my head, and that was to become a millionaire or something approaching one.

"But, friends, my life was spared, and the least I could do, I thought, was in some way to make amends. Therefore, I have concluded to utilize what at first appeared to be a misfortune, and make of it a fortune in the possession of as much respect, love and happiness as I am able to accumulate. None will try to waylay me in the mountains and rob me of this, for it is a possession not justly appreciated by those who steal or even by those who go out to accumulate fortunes legitimately.

"Happiness, for some reason, seems to have no book or market value in this age of the world. Men grind down their fingers, put permanent curvatures in their spines, dull their brains and lose their eyesight and often their reputations in the mad chase for gold.

"It is not necessary for one who has a task such as I have set for myself to work hard. It is easy to be honest and fair and accumulate riches in affection in one's neighborhood; so I am not undertaking a difficult or hazardous job. It is only those, inspired wholly by the desire to gain gold in large quantities, who really work hard. The man who toils with hand or brain for a decent share of worldly wealth honorably at-

tained—money or property—knows more of happiness than he who labors as I did for years to win a fortune that would elevate me—financially—far above everyone in Sawtooth Valley. But I'm sure if I had been successful, as I regarded success, it would have lowered me to a scale of happiness that would have been far below anyone else in this community.

"I feel that I am indeed fortunate in finding that the ore on my land is in insignificant quantity, and that what money I shall share, under my plan, from the sale of town lots will not be more than enough to provide reasonably for the creature comfort of myself and those who will be to some extent dependent upon me.

"The truth of the matter is, friends, the bullet that passed through my face was the luckiest thing that ever happened to me. It brought me a real fortune, and to my mind was little short of a miracle, for it roused me from a decade of dreaming of worldly riches which I never could enjoy as I shall the great fortune in happiness it put within my grasp.

"I *am* a rich man, for I am surely truly happy as never before because it is within my power, and my intention to utilize such power, to make others—everyone, in fact, in Sawtooth Valley—as happy as I am.

"I held to the foolish belief up to the time I

was shot that money—lots of it—was the basis of true happiness. Foolish fallacy! Money is necessary—some money—and there is enough in the world for all of us if some of us do not claw and scramble and try to accumulate more than we need. The natural supply is here—everywhere—God-given and ready for us; but there has got to be, in order that it may be more equally divided, a spirit of divine love, and greater wisdom on the part of humanity before we are all able to receive our shares. Neither the poor nor the rich have the correct understanding; we must abolish selfishness and greed which brings on injustice, hatred, commercial animosities of men and nations and finally bloody war. We must, to acquire our share of the natural supply of comforts which brings in the end peace and happiness, adopt methods not yet generally understood and consequently but little practiced. We—most of us—take, or try to take, more than we need; that is, we attempt to accumulate wealth by the millions of dollars and thus put ourselves in a class. And we defend ourselves for so doing by asserting a fact—that the wealth is here, and requires only the genius of finance, invention or industry to get it. This is true; but while it is true, is it not a fact that though we get wealth in great individual fortunes there are those less qualified to acquire it who do not and who suffer?

Can we be happy and see suffering? It is not always a good defense to say that it is lawful or natural for a man of ability to acquire wealth, if by so doing he is accumulating that which God gave for all the world to share. He is entitled to it, yes, by all laws; but if he takes more than he needs he leaves happiness behind.

"Now do not think that I am inveighing against the rich, as a class, or that I have become a fanatic. The rich, under our present system of living, have a right to what they acquire through honest industry, invention or genius. But how many of them are truly happy? Remember, I do not deny them what they have earned or acquired by their genius, their financial ability or commercial shrewdness. I simply say they are not rich in the true sense.

"Happiness is rare in the household of the man who employs a staff consisting of a butler, two or three chauffeurs, and twenty-two other servants, but who, for example, hasn't enjoyed a meeting at a pancake breakfast with his family in ten years!

"All I am talking about is happiness and misery. There is lots of misery owing to lack of money; but there is more caused by a surplus of it. If I am right, the immensely rich ought to see the point; and those who struggle for great riches in the belief that they will find some happiness with

the first million and true happiness with the second, third and fourth and tenth, and the added syllable multi, will turn their attention—if they can spare an idle hour—to something that is almost sure to have been overlooked—the acquirement of wealth in respect, admiration and affection from those who, perchance, while not geniuses in accumulating gold, are themselves multimillionaires of a wholly different kind.

"Perhaps I shall never have as good an opportunity as the one now presenting itself to pay public tribute to one who deserves from me more than I am able to give in words—I refer to Mrs. Abigail Thornton.

"It was Mrs. Thornton who, when I believed my earthly end to be not far off, and told her my story—my ambitions and plans—inspired me with renewed thoughts of my Creator, and in her home prayed for my recovery.

"And it was Abigail Thornton who, when my recovery was assured, encouraged me to develop the latent teachings of my good mother that true happiness came from within; that the man who loves self in the world above all else and looks to self in the world in everything alienates himself from the divine and separates himself from heaven.

"She gave me my start on the road to immense wealth in happiness.

"I made a false start when I came to this valley to win with money the hand of the daughter of a man whose whole life was lived in, for, with and about money. It was his God, and it began in the university to be mine. It was his daughter's also, peace to her innocent soul; but she couldn't help it. It was her natural life, her surroundings. It was Banker Milton's mistaken notion of happiness—a good man, true enough, but from my present viewpoint, acquired by both sad and happy experience—a poor unfortunate, one of thousands whose lives are made miserable by a prevailing fiction looking like fact—that money brings happiness.

"It takes mistakes, sometimes of the head—and even of the heart—to bring some of us out of our day-dreams. Mine accumulated into a series, beginning with the idea that by living years almost as a recluse, and under disguise, I might be able sometime to claim the hand of a millionaire's daughter because I had accumulated a hundred thousand dollars.

"It was not to be, for I was to win much less than that in money but vastly more in something else, and become what I am—*a multimillionaire in happiness.*"

As the newly established Sawtooth City *Sun* (now read by a population of 10,000) said, "Everything passed off pleasantly and everyone

seemed perfectly happy, especially Mrs. Thornton, when, at the close of the dinner, Mr. Ellarson said that while both he and Mrs. Thornton expected to make quite a bit of money out of the town lots, they had acquired something more valuable than gold—"true happiness." . . .

And hadn't Sawtooth Ike said:

"Abigail, I promise to be a good father to your two fine sons."



BOOK II



CHAPTER I

A "TOWN MEETING"

The arrival of the "advance guard" of the railroad was followed by a "town meeting" held in the open on a plot of land that had been set aside for park purposes by the Ellarson-Thornton Sawtooth Townsite Corporation, in which the boomers were largely in the majority. A rough grand-stand had been erected for the speakers who had various projects to promote, and who proposed to seize upon this opportunity to give them a start. Of course a town or city government was the uppermost necessity, in order that law and order should have a proper start, and this was the prime object of the meeting. Most of the men who made up the crowd of several hundred boomers apparently were law-abiding and genuine pioneers who had come for the purpose of speculation in real estate or to open stores and engage in business. There were young lawyers who had but recently received their sheepskins and were looking for openings in the new

country; there were older ones who had failed at home; several doctors, and a half-dozen editors, one of whom had freighted in across the rough country a small power press, a gasoline engine and enough types to print a newspaper; and he issued Vol. I, No. 1 a week before the meeting.

But in the gathering there were hard faces of both men and women, and it was plainly evident that while state prohibition was in effect, and that the gambling laws were clearly drawn and set forth on the statutes of the state, the law enforcement problem bade fair to be one of great moment. The only authority was the sheriff—Samuels and a few deputies—all of whom while considered to be good citizens, had grown up in and out of office under a system of looseness and indifference. Gambling was a habit in the valley, and liquor selling had but recently become a criminal business. The few original settlers had been industrious and orderly and had not, after the law went into effect, attempted to evade it; when the boom began Baxter's was dry as a bone.

However, within the past week Mr. Ellarson and others had noted that considerable quantities of liquor had been freighted in, and that a shack on the edge of the irrigation ditch was an attractive place to many of the newcomers. It soon developed that whisky was being sold openly. Both Ellarson and Mrs. Thornton had deter-

mined that from the start, as soon as the town was incorporated, it should be strictly dry; also that professional gamblers should be prevented from plying their trade.

The crowd at the meeting contained a half-dozen of this gentry—men known to be criminals who follow with and in advance of every new railroad enterprise in the West. It looked bad to the good citizens in the crowd, and they included not only the homesteaders and employés of the irrigation company, Messrs. Burton, (Ellarson's university classmate) Sheriff Samuels, the Langworthys and others, but two ministers of the gospel, a Catholic priest and a Methodist preacher.

Before the meeting was called to order the various elements making up the crowd seemed to foregather in groups. There had been, on the part of the settlers, some previous discussion of a plan of action, and it had been determined to then and there organize a city government with a mayor, board of aldermen, and other officials. A ticket had been agreed upon, a charter drawn and a request made upon the governor for endorsement of the slate.

Those of the boomers who had come to Sawtooth City for legitimate business were, it was soon apparent, about evenly divided on the question of an "open" or "closed" town. Men who

had brought in stocks of goods, and even some of the professional men, held different views on the question and discussed them freely. The editors were thus far neutral. Those in favor of a loose and free construction of the gambling and liquor laws vigorously advocated such a course, believing that with a well-organized police force the laws might with profit to themselves be bent if not broken. The opposition, led by Mr. Ellarson, Father O'Connor and the Rev. Gordon Roberts, stood firmly for law-enforcement to the very letter and purposed to fight vigorously for a city administration that would prevent gambling and liquor selling.

Finally someone becoming irritated by the delay suggested that a chairman of the meeting be chosen, whereupon Pete Baxter mounted the platform and shouted:

"I move that Mr. Isaac Thomas Ellarson, a pioneer citizen of this valley, and one who is loved and esteemed by all who know him, be chosen as chairman of this meeting. And while I'm about it, ladies and gentlemen, I want to make an announcement:

"When I came to Sawtooth Valley I opened a saloon, the only one within sixty miles in any direction, and I conducted a poker game in which some of our best citizens whiled away the dreary hours waiting for the ditches to be dug. Honestly,

we were a happy little family here, far away from other towns or settlements, and I believe I can truthfully say that no man was ever robbed in my place, or that any tragedy ever resulted from drinking liquor that I sold. But I never did like the business I was in, and when the state legislature passed the prohibition law I poured the few gallons of booze I owned into the pure waters of Mountain Creek, threw open my doors to the ladies of the settlement and began to sell pop. It annoyed me a little at first, and I expected to close up and get out o' here; but I didn't and am glad to say that I occupy a new status with my old friends in this valley. They all say they respect me now, whereas, while I sold liquor to them and took a rakeoff from the poker tables, they regarded me as a good fellow and perhaps a necessary evil. The ladies didn't even consider me a good fellow, though, for when their husbands were away from home late at night, I was the one to blame—they were at Baxter's, of course; but now, gentlemen, some of these same women bring their knitting to my place and sit at the old tables and gossip.

"It has all made a different man of me; and as I have bought a half dozen lots and hold options on another half dozen in this town, I am anxious to have them increase in real value. If we run this town as the new towns in the old West used to be

run, and as I understand some of them on the new railroad east of here are being run, we are going to have a few months of hot times, tragedies, drunkenness, a floating, non-productive gang who make a business of living off the industrious and honest citizen.

"I want you all to know that I am going to throw the weight of what little influence I've got in favor of law and order—the strictest kind of enforcement. And if some of the men in this crowd who came here for the purpose of gambling or bootlegging will take the advice of a man who once was known far and wide in the state as a gambler and a seller of booze, they will waste no time here. The law is mighty and the law and order element in Sawtooth Valley is strong enough to enforce it."

When Baxter stepped down into the crowd he was greeted by hearty shouts of "Good boy!" "Baxter's all right!" and vociferous hand clapping on the part of what appeared to be about one-half of those present. The others looked crestfallen and apparently stunned. However, just as one of the boomers, a man of middle-age and good appearance advanced to the stand, the Rev. Mr. Roberts shouted:

"I nominate Isaac Thomas Ellarson for mayor of Sawtooth City, subject to the decision of the qualified voters of this community at an election

to be held upon the authority of the governor of this state, on a date to be fixed hereafter. In the meantime I suggest that this town meeting by ballot vote upon the question of authorizing the nominee of the meeting to act in the capacity of mayor from and after this date until election time, giving him full authority to act so far as law and order is concerned; he to appoint a police force and a municipal judge. It is understood that this is the voluntary action of all present, including everyone who is here for a good purpose, and that we all agree that the result, whatever it may be, binds all of us, as it did the miners of the old frontier to recognize the acts of the mayor as legal, and that he shall be all-powerful until the government is succeeded by one chosen according to the laws of the state."

The gamblers by this time, backed by some of the boomers, seemed to wake up. A good-looking young man succeeded in climbing upon the stand; and with his hat in his hand, which he used to emphasize what he said by slapping it upon his knees, proceeded:

"Gentlemen—and ladies: I don't mind telling you that I have been disappointed at the looks of things, but. . . . Here we are, from all sections of the country, attracted by the great opportunities that present themselves here in this wonderful valley. The intention, I observe, on the

part of those who have thus far spoken, is to start things here without the customary frills—no gambling, no liquor, no life.

"I have spent several years following the calling of a boomer; have gambled some, speculated in real estate, and when I felt like it, taken a drink. Do you mean to tell me you can successfully boom this waste spot into a big town without these things? If you can convince me I'm ready to say to you that this part of the boom gang is willing to listen and to learn; but believe me, folks, you are trying a big experiment.

"I've been at Oklahoma, Arizona, and Nevada booms, and in Alaska, and all of 'em had open gambling and drinking. I know there were killings and robberies and other crime; and in every case fortunes were made by hundreds of men, and there was real life. To me the idea of booming a town with a cold-water program and no rattling of chips looks like a losing venture.

"But what Mr. Baxter had to say has impressed me greatly. I am not naturally a bad man, and am not seeking notoriety. I am not advocating law-breaking. I never would. The truth is, ladies and gentlemen, I can't back up an argument for an open town.

"I notice that some of my pals are looking sour; they don't like what I'm saying, but I can't help it, boys, I'm sick and tired of booming and

gambling, and I can see from the spot where I now stand, I believe, my future home—in a community of fine people who are bent upon establishing permanent businesses and homes."

After a pause—

"I'm with you, and will make the experiment with you. But I haven't any great hopes of success. It's just another gamble, but a game I've never tried. . . . And I'll play fair, too. Nevertheless, while I intended to nominate a man who is so wet that he's positively soggy, I take pleasure in seconding the nomination of Mister—what's the name?"

"Mr. Ellarson—we used to call him Sawtooth Ike," yelled Baxter.

"Well, I second the nomination, then, of Mr. Ellarson as temporary mayor of Sawtooth City with full power to act for us until a legal election is held.

"In the meantime let me say that I have within a mile from this spot in a dugout, a gambling outfit, consisting of a roulette wheel and a faro table, and I promise to keep it where it is without using it, at least until I give, with you, a good test of the experiment you propose."

The "open town" section of the crowd had materially dwindled when the young man stepped down.

Someone yelled: "What's your name?"

"Never mind my name," he replied, "call me the ex-gambler if you choose; but if you want it in the record of this meeting (addressing the secretary, who was Mrs. Langworthy) put me down as Sim Elkins."

Mrs. Langworthy smilingly passed to "Sim Elkins" a blank petition which she requested him to sign; also a copy of a proclamation which she asked him to read, saying:

"We want you and Mr. Baxter to be the first to sign this petition, which is addressed to Governor Taylor, asking him for his official and moral support in the establishment of a model community. The proclamation was drawn previous to this meeting and will be signed by the mayor if we choose the right kind of a man."

For a few moments there was a recess, followed by a proposition made by Mrs. Thornton who, from the center of the crowd, said:

"Are there any further nominations for mayor? If not, I move that we proceed to an election either by ballot or viva voce, as the meeting decides. Shall we have a vote?"

"Vote! Vote!" came from all sides. It was decided unanimously on Mrs. Thornton's additional motion that the ballot should be viva voce, and she then announced that if there were no further nominations the vote should be——

"Shall Isaac Thomas Ellarson be our mayor until a legal election is held?"

The response was a roar of "Yes!"

"Are there no negative votes?" she asked.

There was perfect silence, though it was noticed that four or five men, and as many women, slunk away toward the Buckhorn trail.

Mr. Ellarson spent less than a minute in making his speech of acceptance; it contained a simple promise that his actions should be governed by the will of the majority, "which," he said, "it is quite apparent, is in favor of law and order." The rest of the city organization's temporary slate was elected in short order.

The "open town" boomers, who had come to the meeting prepared to shout—and even fight—for control had been completely squelched, largely by the statements of Baxter and Elkins. The last named was bullyragged a bit by some of the boomers, but Elkins told them he was willing to try his hand at honest money-making, believed this was an opportunity, and that he purposed to try it once, anyway, because he believed there was "a better gamble in this proposition" than there would be in the old way, inasmuch as the sentiment seemed to be against an open town; also, so far as he was concerned, gambling was in more ways than one a failure; opposition to moral law

enforcement on his part meant a short-lived fight with the authorities and certain disaster ahead for lawbreakers. He was getting sick of it, anyway, and advised those who came with him to either pull up stakes or join earnestly in the experiment of booming the town by an entirely new method.

It was not to be all smooth sailing, however, for the crowds were still coming in; the hourly arrivals by the new auto route and over the mountain trails, some just broken, were now in the neighborhood of one hundred. They came in autos, wagons, afoot and horseback, and even in Monte Allison's ancient stage that had done service since the days of the Black Hills stampede.

Mayor Ellarson's first official act after the issuance of his proclamation, was the appointment of Peter Baxter as chief of police. He next sent for Elkins to come to his office which he had established in one of the knock-down, ready-to-use houses that had been shipped to him from the East.

"Mr. Elkins," said the Mayor, "we are strangers, and I know nothing about your antecedents. That you have been a gambler and wanderer you freely admit; but we are here, several thousands of us, and more coming, in this beautiful valley, a lot of men and women suddenly thrown together, with a variety of tastes and habits, religion, callings and ambitions. Ap-

parently you came here, as you have gone to other towns, to follow the sporting game; but when you saw the determined faces of the settlers of the valley and heard what they had to say in favor of a new deal in town-booming—and this including the sentiments of a man well known here, Mr. Baxter—you had a change of heart. How much of this is real remains to be demonstrated. I do not insinuate that you are insincere—in fact, I believe you mean every word you uttered at the meeting. You are not all bad; no man is, and perhaps you have never had just this kind of an opportunity—the one I'm about to give you—to be a good and lawful citizen.

"You will understand, Mr. Elkins, that I am taking you at your word, and depending on that, together with a fairly good judgment I possess concerning men—the faces of men.

"I have appointed Peter Baxter chief of police. He knows the gamblers and will know the bootleggers; if he doesn't he'll get acquainted. We need you to help in what you consider an experiment, but which I am certain is a positive demonstration. I don't care a fig about your past. We'll bury that here and now if you say so, and do it with but little ceremony. Only one thing I want to know, for if you succeed and help us in our demonstration it will be necessary for your future welfare. If you are to have success here

you must win it in your own name. . . . Is Elkins your right name?"

After but a moment's hesitation Elkins said:

"No, Mr. Ellarson, I'm frank to admit that it is not; but I assure you that I did not assume the name of Elkins because of any dark crime. I am, to tell you the truth, so proud of my family name that I never could bring myself to the point of using it while I followed the calling of gambler. I am not a blue-blooded aristocrat, or the son of a a prominent man; but both my father and my mother are of the so-called great middle class, religious and well-to-do. I have for a long time been a wanderer and a sport, beginning this career on the tracks of Churchill Downs and Sheepshead Bay, and gradually developing into other forms of gambling, until I considered myself a professional. But I have succeeded in hiding most of this from my parents. My father is not entirely satisfied that I am living a good life; in fact, he is certain that I am not, for at one time I had a little trouble in a Nebraska town, and in the pinch was obliged to call on father for help.

"There is, Mr. Ellarson, bound to be disaster to me, even with such success as I may achieve here in whatever part you want me to play—understand that—for in winning my way back into good society I am bound to be looked upon as an ex-gambler. This is sure to reach the ears of my

dear mother, and I fear it will break her heart and be a disgrace she could not bear, for she is very proud, and I love her dearly.

"You see what I have to face in any attempt at reformation. I can't cast off carelessly the character I have had, and never see or feel it again. If the stigma was to be wholly mine, I wouldn't hesitate a second; I would say to you, 'Mr. Mayor, make me the first street sweeper or the first scavenger or garbage collector of Sawtooth City and let me work my way up to whatever position I am capable of filling.' Can I reform and not, in so doing, cause my mother shame and embarrassment?"

Isaac Ellarson listened with deep interest, weighing every word, and noting every action of his caller. He was a man of quick judgment with men. He rarely made a mistake, and when he arose from his chair where he had remained sitting up to this time, he extended his hand and said:

"Young man, you have a problem to solve; it is one largely for yourself, but you need a good friend. That one I promise to be. If your heart is as stout and your determination as good and genuine as I believe it to be, it will be but a few hours before the past is a long way behind you.

"We have much to do here; we need energy and energetic young men. We need men who like

yourself, have had experience with the world—its rough edges—and who have the natural inclination to be good citizens.

"Your talents as a gambler may be of great use to you yet, my boy; men who gamble, as I know from experience, especially those who gamble for a livelihood, are necessarily men of intelligence; and if not wholly lost and corrupted, a former gambler ought to make either a good city auditor, tax or public works commissioner, or even treasurer.

"I have all of these positions open for good men; and any one of them is open to you.

"You smile as if this were incongruous; but, my son, it is not. I have, in my experience on the frontier, found a peculiar yet high class of honor among certain gamblers. Some of them I have trusted whereas I refused confidences and loans to men who made great professions of honor. Do not think, sir, that I regard *any* gambler as peculiarly qualified for my confidence or respect; for I would never under any circumstances choose a gambler for a public office or as my personal representative.

"But you have, you say, determined to enter into what you choose to call our experiment. It is not an experiment, but a demonstration. If you are willing to attack this job with us, shoulder to

shoulder, as a demonstration, and will leave the rest—the result to yourself and your father and mother—accepting what comes as a natural and orderly outcome, grasp my hand, give me your full name and accept my sincere and solemn pledge of brotherhood."

Sim Elkins, nervy faro dealer, card manipulator and high stake player, who had hundreds of times nonchalantly heaped his gold into the center of a table; who had bet his last ten dollar note on the turn of a card without flinching, was pale. His hand, resting in Ellarson's, shook perceptibly. He spoke slowly and with some emotion, looking squarely into Ellarson's eyes.

"Mr. Mayor," he said, "I surely appreciate the confidence you are placing in me, an entire stranger, and you will never regret it. From this hour I shall travel a new route, with a high mark for my aim. With such confidence and such assistance and opportunity I believe I shall be able to make a record not only for myself but to help you to succeed in your great undertaking. And what comes to me and mine shall be what I choose, and that shall be natural. If it must develop that I have for years gambled and been more or less of a social outcast, it will be better for those who knew me as a boy to know that though I took the wrong road I finally found the right one. Even my be-

loved mother would prefer this to what in the end she would know should I proceed along the old path . . .

"My name, Mr. Ellarson, is Ralph Dixon, I am twenty-nine years of age, and my father's home is in Ohio, where I had a common school education in the city of Cleveland, and three years as a law clerk, and I have a good knowledge of common law practice, real estate conveyance and the probate business. I will give you my father's address, and ask you to write to him and say that I have been chosen to fill the office of—of what?"

"For the present," replied the Mayor, "you will act in the capacity of Judge of the Municipal court, and incidentally as my secretary and advisor. I intend you to be at the very beginning, a member of my cabinet; but I shall see to it, when the regular city ticket is put in the field that you are the administration candidate for the office of Municipal Judge, if you make good, or give you a trial on the Board of Public Works.

"We have little time to spend in a further discussion of plans. The crowds are coming in, and among the newcomers are many gamblers and thieves, Baxter reports. We have got to get after them. Baxter has chosen a force of sixteen policemen and has already begun a round-up. Tonight I'm getting in place some fire apparatus and must organize a volunteer department. You

are to occupy the house adjoining this, as Municipal Judge, and as these men are brought before you I want you to talk to them and convince them that, unless they are willing to work or engage in some honest business, they had better move back to the older camps along the line of the new railroad. Tell them, in every case, that on failure to engage in lawful employment within a few hours—there is lots of work—they will be escorted by the Civic Committee which I have chosen, to a spot beyond the range."

As the Mayor and Judge Dixon emerged from the "City Hall" they saw coming toward them Chief of Police Baxter and a rough-looking character.

"He's handcuffed," said the mayor to the new judge, nodding his head toward the prisoner; "guess this will be your first case."

"This man," said Baxter, addressing the mayor, "is a bootlegger; he has several kegs of whisky and cases of beer in a dugout on Flathead, outside the town boundaries, and I have brought him to you. He's a bad egg, Mr. Ellarson, and gave me a fight, but here he is—the first arrest in Sawtooth City."

The man seemed to have partaken of his own liquor so freely that he was almost speechless.

"Take him into the courtroom," said the mayor, pointing to the ready-to-use house adjoin-

ing the mayor's office; "Judge Dixon will be on hand in a few minutes and dispose of the case."

In less than an hour, the bootlegger, followed by three members of the Civic Committee, was being paraded up and down between the rows of shanties and log shacks by Chief Baxter who repeated in a loud voice this statement:

"Gentlemen! Listen! This man, who is a bootlegger, has been sentenced by Judge Dixon to a term of one hundred years which he must spend somewhere the other side of Sawtooth range."

Finally the prisoner was taken by the committee in an automobile to a point between Sawtooth City and Bordertown and there left to hoof it in any direction except one. This ceremony was repeated a number of times the first week. Judge Dixon, assuming great dignity, as did Chief Baxter, who had already acquired a blue coat and a silver shield with "Chief of Police" stamped upon it. Several gambling parties were broken up, and in one case a roulette wheel was brought, with ten prisoners, to court by Baxter and his officers. The judge questioned the prisoners, especially the owners of the gambling paraphernalia, closely, and in a dignified and genuinely judicial manner.

"Men," he would say, "if you can read it is clear to me that you know it is a particularly

heinous crime for you to gamble in Sawtooth City. You have gambled and knowingly violated the law, which is posted in a hundred places with the mayor's proclamation. There is but one punishment for one and all alike, at the present time, and that is banishment from this community, which seems to me to be severe in view of the fact that there is so much opportunity here for the exploitation of legitimate business.

"It is the sentence of the court that you be taken to a point beyond the city limits and there directed to the nearest railroad point. If you return here we shall imprison you, and perhaps the Civic Committee will not be as gentle with you as they intend to be on this occasion."

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CHAPTER II

A NIGHT IN LOCKWOOD CITY

(*And a Morning After*)

It was just a year ago this July 25th that Sawtooth City's first town meeting was held, and a preliminary organization formed to conduct the affairs of the community until a legal election was held. The election which followed in fifteen days was so tame and formal and unanimously one-sided that it is hardly worth while going into details. It is enough, perhaps, to say that Isaac Thomas Ellarson was chosen mayor, and that all his appointments were confirmed by a Board of Aldermen that was, to use a term common in politics, "hand-picked." But as Mrs. Thornton remarked when someone suggested that the slate was a solid Ellarson-Thornton affair, "It has the advantage of variety, anyway, for it includes one ex-saloon-keeper, a reformed gambler, a Salvation Army captain, a Methodist minister, a veteran of the Indian wars, a real estate agent, a

hotel keeper, a housewife and a man who played a piano in dance halls along the line of the new railroad until he landed in the valley."

With this kind of a combination it surely couldn't be said that there was much class distinction shown in making up the slate, or that the so-called "interests," including the railroad, irrigation company and the land companies, several of which formed the past few months, were powerful and mighty and backed by big men in the East. The City Attorney, "Bob" Colton, was also "hand-picked"; but neither Colton nor any man on the aldermanic board was asked his politics or his intentions. A general understanding had been reached, however, that Sawtooth City was to be different—that was all—the difference being that it was not to be on any plans followed at other camps in the West, especially that of Lockwood City, sixty miles east, another division point on the Mid-Continent Railroad.

Lockwood City already had a name that was familiar in every newspaper office in the land; for a year and a half the Associated Press had spread its fame—its infamy—and few days passed that did not find its name printed in display types in sizes that extended from a single-column, to a seven-column ribbon across many front pages, these captions carrying the stories of murders, lynchings, rioting, incendiarism,

drunkenness and gambling; but rarely a line of progress, industry or enterprise.

Naturally Sawtooth City, a few months younger, and only a few hours' ride away, and not essentially different in natural prospects and advantages, was seldom mentioned. Lockwood City was out on the plains in the sagebrush, and in what had been a cattle country, watered by two good-sized rivers draining mountain streams and joining almost in the center of the new town, furnishing a splendid irrigation facility for the loamy soil in the neighborhood.

But Lockwood City had no Isaac Thomas Ellarson—it had a George Crandall and a Michael Sullivan, both at one time business men of good reputation in Kansas towns from which they originally came to garner wealth and fame in the new country. They had ideas and plans of their own, based to some extent upon their own past experiences but largely on historical data which convinced them that no great Western city had ever amounted to anything unless it began life as a rowdy; in fact, their researches proved that all new towns began life about as far removed from law and order as they could be maintained without being actually given over wholly to disorder and corruption.

"We've got to have a noisy town, with the lid

off and under some control," they would say, "otherwise we'll never be heard of."

It was just before trains began running to Sawtooth City that Mayor Ellarson, accompanied by Judge Dixon and Chauffeur George Coon—now in the mayor's employ—motored over to Lockwood City to spend the night and return a call made the week before from Mayor Crandall and his chief of police, Michael Sullivan, who came over on one of the first locomotives to enter the valley. The Lockwood City officials had heard about Sawtooth City's municipal water works, its sewer system, already installed, and the asphalt paving that was under way. They hadn't started anything of the kind in Lockwood City—not yet. Differing from Sawtooth, Lockwood is a county seat—the capital of Crow county—and while thus established before the railroad was built, it hadn't amounted to much more than a cow camp. However, it had a courthouse, a jail and a semblance of good order, though it had emerged to this class through an early stage of rum and gunplays, some gambling and a few resultant tragedies. Still it was barely shown on the maps, being represented in the center of a wide blank space of the territory by a mere dot at which point met the mountain streams that flowed eastward at a rapid pace due to the fact that while the water was out on the

boundless prairies, still it was flowing along a steep roof of the shed leading down to the old buffalo range. These streams were scrawled across the map like tiny threads and attracted little attention. A stage had for years passed to and fro and through Lockwood, formerly Birchwood, but changed to Lockwood to tickle the vanity of a state senator whose favor was sought by men who were interested in the new town. The stage had, years before, when a few bands of Arapahoe Indians still pitched their tepees at will along the creeks, run on into the Sawtooth country and beyond to Warm Springs where the cattle and sheep interests first clashed over the ranges.

The remnants of these old gangs, including cattle rustlers, sheep men, and a few prospectors and hunters after the feuds were settled and the ranges divided, clung to the pioneer settlements.

Pete Baxter was one of these, Sullivan was another.

In what they called the palmy, good old days, Sullivan was known never as Mike but always as "Salty"; Baxter had been a teamster in the early days and prided himself that he was the one and only man in Sawtooth—or Lockwood, either—who knew how to yoke up and string out a team of seven pairs of oxen to a combination outfit

consisting of two wagons, a lead and a trail, and negotiate the deep sands of the desert or the breaknecks in the mountains.

It was because Mayor Ellarson knew of the former acquaintanceship of Salty and Pete, that he hadn't invited Pete Baxter to make the trip to return the call made by Crandall and Sullivan. They really ought to get together, he thought, and co-operate; but that was something to be worked out and developed with Baxter absent. Mayor Ellarson knew something about the lifetime of an old grudge; and while he knew of none existing between these two police chiefs, he did know that when Sullivan was in Sawtooth City Baxter had acknowledged the introduction made by Mayor Crandall with a rather cold bow, saying:

"Yes, we've met before," and adding, as he walked away,

"Sorry, gentlemen, but I must be going; a couple of rough-necks have just come in from the *East* [meaning Lockwood City] and I have a Sawtooth souvenir to present to 'em."

Mayor Ellarson had, on this occasion, explained to Crandall and Sullivan that it was the policy of the administration to hand cards to positively identified vagabonds which read:

"This is a busy town; we need good citizens,

and if you want work it is here for the asking. But you *must* work, or go back where you came from."

He explained that the administration made good on this plan; that is, it gave even the vagabond a chance. If he decided to go to work he was provided with a sewer digging or paving job, his name recorded, sent to a boarding house or the Salvation Army barracks with another card, and given a start. To hesitate a moment, he said, meant an escort of two policemen to the city limits.

Sullivan could hardly restrain a sneer, but he managed to do it, though his face was a picture of disgust and he followed Baxter's retreating form with his eyes until he had turned the first corner of Main street. Crandall merely remarked that he thought Sawtooth City would have its hands full when there was a hobo rush, or whenever the mud-hens, as he called the graders, swooped down on the town. Mayor Ellarson replied that they knew how to discriminate, and that as no liquor was sold in town the mud-hens stuck pretty close to other camps and only stayed in Sawtooth City long enough to buy such things as they needed at the stores—boots, clothing, and perhaps a good square meal at the Valley or Mountain View restaurant!

The Sawtooth City party reached Lockwood

City at dusk. At this time the railroad was running to Lockwood as a division point, and one big shop had been erected; but work had been suspended, on another, only the frame being up. The site of the old stage-station was now the principal street corner and was occupied by the Pioneer Hotel, restaurant and saloon, the saloon being called a café. Next door was a variety theatre and along the block opposite all the buildings sat close together, being of wood except the one opposite the Pioneer Hotel. This also was a hotel, called the Lockwood, and a "café" adjoined it around the corner on a cross-street. There was just one sign in the block opposite the Pioneer that did not read C-a-f-é—it was the Lockwood. Doors were open, music came from a dozen pianos, and even thus early could be heard the voices and shuffling feet of dancers. Every place in the block was a saloon, and liquor was sold freely over a dozen bars.

Mayor Ellarson and the judge drew up in the gumbo in front of the Pioneer, one front wheel sinking to the hub while the other rested on a hard-head. They were greeted by Mayor Crandall and Chief Sullivan. The meeting couldn't have been more cordial and as soon as it became noised about that the mayor and municipal judge of Sawtooth City were in town the hotel barroom filled to overflowing for it was there the

guests were taken, and they readily responded to the invitation to "take something," for they were determined to be Romans while in Rome; anyway, they were guests and had no notion of putting on any airs of superiority or of declining to take a drink even though such an act might be construed as a violation of the law. There wasn't a particle of danger; they knew that, and so far as Ellarson and Dixon were concerned (Coon stayed in his machine on orders from the boss) neither one had ever made any false pretensions.

Both liked a drink of liquor once in awhile, and when they wanted one, even in Sawtooth City, they took it, for they had it on hand. However, it was the law not to sell it in the state at this time, and one particular determination had been reached by Mayor Ellarson and indorsed by Dixon and practically by everyone else in Sawtooth City, and that was that Sawtooth was to have nothing on sale that had a kick in it; therefore this visit—this resting the foot on the Pioneer's brass rail—was something of a novelty if not, in truth, just for the time being, a real pleasure to the two visitors.

They knew how to be guests as well as hosts; and when Mayor Crandall and Chief Sullivan had been in Sawtooth City hadn't Mayor Ellarson treated to the ice-cream, the lemon pop, ginger

ale, and the cigars? And hadn't Crandall and Sullivan, both with faces livid from heavy indulgence, and indicating high blood pressure to a stage almost of apoplexy, been real sports, accepting the courtesies as Sawtooth City's representatives had offered them, without a suggestion?

Surely none could outdo the Ellarson-Dixon combination; they wouldn't have it. And so they drank with Crandall, with Sullivan and with the street commissioner! How they wanted to congratulate him on his fine streets! And then there was the proprietor of the Pioneer, Jake Harms, a man whose fame reached from the muddy Missouri to Pocatello, said fame consisting in the reputation he bore that never, not once in his life, had he ever been seen wearing a white collar, or any other kind of a collar unless it might be one attached to a flannel shirt. Harms, too, was one of the pioneers and to mention old times in his presence meant a talk—every word from him—lasting if begun say at this hour, six p. m., until the break of day on the morrow with drinks thrown in. Also Harms had notches on his gun, how many none knew, and he lied when he was in a mood to brag about the "good old days" as he called them.

The Sawtooth delegation could not, according to the rules of society prevailing in this part of the country at this time, refuse to join in a bot-

tle with Harms, and nothing so shocking happened, either, for it would have been shocking if they had, and this story would have a turn not on the program. No, neither Ellarson nor Dixon refused or even intimated that they had enough, or that they had business elsewhere. They just drank until there were no more "prominent citizens" for Harms to send for, or for Crandall or Sullivan to suggest, and the engagement here ended in just an hour. George Coon, with regrets, declined to take a drop when someone took a glass of whisky out to him; but as it was admitted that the only real fatal auto accident in Lockwood City was caused by a drunken chauffeur, he was excused.

Finally, Dixon allowed that they—meaning himself and Mayor Ellarson—felt that they had been delightfully entertained, and if the hosts had no objection would now proceed to "take a glance at the town"—wouldn't they, the Lockwood mayor and chief, "ride with him in the Sawtooth municipal automobile?" Dixon was taking it for granted that there was no such vehicle in Lockwood City, because both Crandall and Sullivan were still sticking to their bronchos of the cattle range days, but whether for the pure love of the saddle and a good horse, or because it was a dangerous undertaking to motor through the streets, he wasn't sure. However, he had an idea, and

it was that motoring around town, at least, was too big a hazard for the representatives of the administration; also he knew of but one decent road in the vicinity and that ran from the outskirts of Lockwood City in the direction of Sawtooth City, and had been built by the state. It was some time later on that the visitors discovered that this was a tender subject, and that Judge Dixon had unintentionally insulted Sullivan, if not the mayor himself. Their faces showed it, and what they said indicated at least something of what was going on in their minds. The judge and Mayor Ellarson had been decently free with the liquor from the bar, but being careful in selecting their portions had not inflamed their brains. Not so some of the others. Harms and Sullivan were both half seas over, and were saying things that had a growl in them. Finally, slapping Mayor Ellarson on the back, Harms said:

"Mayor, you're a good feller, all right, but you've got a bum town."

The mayor smiled, only remarking that "after all, it's only a question of taste—you know we can't all be just alike; and it seems to me that really men are about the same the world over, creatures of their environments."

"Creatures!" shouted Harms; "did you hear him—and that other—what d'ye mean by that?"

"Oh, nothing," said the Sawtooth executive with just a little show of impatience. "Let it go, Harms. I understand you, and I guess you've taken my measure more than once. . . . Your mayor and chief are going to take a trip around town in our machine; we'll see you later on. Thanks for your hospitality. When you feel like taking a vacation come on over to Sawtooth, and we'll try to show you a good time in our way."

The mayor of Lockwood, fearing a scene, moved toward the door, motioning Sullivan to follow, and saying to Mayor Ellarson and the judge:

"All right; let's go outside, anyway, for a little air"; and turning to Harms, he whispered:

"Cool off, old man!" Whereupon Sullivan, who had hung to the bar, uniform, big silver star, gold rope around his black cavalry hat and all, insisted on "just one more drink," and Harms joined in the demand, saying,

"Any man who refuses is a coyote."

This was the signal for Judge Dixon to interpose with something sounding judicial, so he said:

"Gentlemen, we have accepted your courtesies rather freely, and it is the opinion of this court, which, while valueless here and now, but nevertheless full of sound sense, that we preserve Chief Sullivan's invitation for a later hour—say eleven

o'clock, when we will all have another, and like good citizens retire for the night."

"Retire! retire!" shouted Harms. "Hear that man; why, we just got up. Hell, men, the day has just started in Lockwood City; and I repeat that any man who refuses *now* to drink with me is a coyote."

Mayor Crandall moved toward the bar, trying to smile and look unconcerned, but Mayor Ellarson and Judge Dixon again started for the street.

"You're coyotes—both of you," screamed Harms, whereupon he whipped out a six-shooter and cocked it, saying:

"You can't leave until——"

But Jake Harms was too slow, as everyone observed when from behind a screen came two men, one of whom gripped Harms' wrist and shook the gun to the floor, while the other quietly pointed a gun in the face of Chief Sullivan who had attempted to draw his when he saw that the man standing before him was Lean Bacon Johnson and his companion, Peter Baxter, erstwhile saloonkeeper and now chief of police of Sawtooth City.

Guns were lowered all around. Harms whined that he didn't intend to shoot, and Baxter remarked that it was all very well to show Lockwood City in all its phases to the officials of a neighboring town; but when the show got to a

certain point it was necessary to have him in it, otherwise it would be a failure. Wherefore, he had come on alone, picking up Lean Bacon at a construction camp, and from now on intended to be a member of the visiting delegation and was ready for whatever entertainment was left on the program, although saying:

"We're not going to have any more of this kind of nonsense, and while this is a little out of my territory, I'm saying to everyone within the hearing of my voice that I have called on old John Billings, sheriff of Crow county, to be near at hand until this little visit comes to an end. The sheriff and four deputies are outside and Billings tells me he is getting sick and tired of playing second fiddle to the chief of police of this town. So far as I'm concerned, there is going to be no trouble if I can help it, but if it's bound to be I declare myself in, and you," turning to Sullivan, "you remember me, and if you are not ashamed to do it, pull up your pants-leg and show 'em where I marked you ten years ago when you had a cattle brand that covered every other brand within a hundred miles, and you had a reputation as a rustler.

"Now this is all from me until somebody starts something—let's keep Mayor Ellarson's and Judge Dixon's engagements, and see this town."

Sullivan and Harms were meek and lowly, and

ready and willing to be good. They said so, and allowed, as Sullivan said, that what had happened had been really just a little gun-play to show the visitors from the good town over the hills that Lockwood City was still on the map even if work had ceased on the car shops and half of the population had disappeared.

Judge Dixon had been in more than one gun-play in his day; Isaac Thomas Ellarson hadn't. Consequently their views crossed right here. The judge was ready to accept the situation and go ahead as if nothing had occurred to dampen interest in the visit, but Ellarson was for going home without delay, and would have done so then and there, but for the appeal of Mayor Crandall who was profuse with his apologies and explanations.

"There'll be no more of this," he said, putting his hand on Ellarson's shoulder, "come on neighbor, now we're going to a show!"

Baxter and Lean Bacon were at perfect ease, and followed the mayor and judge of Sawtooth City out into the street, keeping their eyes open and mouths shut.

"We'll go with you, mayor," said Baxter, addressing Ellarson, "just act as if nothing had happened; these fellows are a lot of cowards; don't leave town till I give the word. Old Billings will be with us. He despises this gang and

is only waiting for a chance to assert himself. When the boom was on, he was eclipsed, and he doesn't like it. Now the town is being depopulated by the dozens every day, he's beginning to perk up." This in an aside, while Crandall and Judge Dixon were getting into the Sawtooth City municipal automobile. Sullivan had already excused himself with the remark that he would be in evidence all the evening, and a word to Baxter:

"Pete, let's forget the old days. Things are different."

"Yes," said Baxter, "forget it; as sure as you live things are different, but that's sixty miles west from here, and I'm glad it is so. I didn't come over here to tell you how to run your town. Nobody can do that; if they tried it wouldn't do any good. . . . But, say, 'Salty,' whenever you get sick of playing on this old tune—this tough town stuff—and you're out of a job, don't write or wire—come on over and I'll have a job for you that will carry with it a blue uniform, a gold shield, and a desk in a modern police station we are building of brick and stone and iron. I am going to need a sober, industrious, fearless, fair-minded, cool man. You can be all of that and then some. Think it over. I'm not going to recite the obituary of this town of Lockwood. You know it as well as I do—by heart—it has

been written for two thousand towns west of the Missouri and east of the Idaho line. And, say, Salty, if any of your cops are free of the delirium tremens when the day comes to reduce the Lockwood force to one day policeman to make all trains and one lonely night-watchman and a cob pipe whose duty is to keep company with the bats in the empty buildings where forty-rod is now being sold, bring 'em along too, and I'll look 'em over. We don't really need 'em to keep order, but to help us see to it that no one starts any disorder."

"Baxter," said Sullivan, "you're a trump, and I'm listening. Would you let Jake Harms in on this Sawtooth City game anywhere?" This was said by Sullivan rather sarcastically, and without the slightest notion that it wouldn't be taken as a joke, and when he saw and heard what he did, Sullivan was amazed; so was everyone else in the gathering crowd. For Baxter retreated into the saloon and came out with Harms by the arm, saying to him, where all could hear:

"Harms, some of us here in this new country couldn't get very far up in society in some places back East if we had to fill out a blank giving our pedigrees. Yours and mine and one or two others would be spotted; but we over at Sawtooth have forgotten almost everything we know about ourselves and our old pals and neighbors,

and have begun to do business on a clean sheet. If it should ever so happen that you are tired of Lockwood City, or it shouldn't pay to keep hotel here, and that the liquor stalls on you, and you think you could breathe in a town where the strongest drink on sale is lemonade, you have an invitation here and now from me—and from the mayor and the Municipal Court of Sawtooth City —to come on over, register, shake hands all 'round and join in. Strange as it may seem, we still need another hotel, a good one for workingmen, and the city, which has a surplus of cash, is going to build it and engage a good man to run it. I'm sure the mayor will take my O. K. on you for that job; anyway, right here—now—I'm saying to you that if you are a candidate for the job of municipal hotel keeper of Sawtooth City I'll see to it that you have no serious competition for the job, which will be open before snowfall—and it isn't a municipal lodging house, either. How does it strike you, Jake?"

Jake was, to put it in his own words, "paralyzed." He couldn't speak for a couple of seconds, but finally said:

"Pete Baxter, when this party came into this town I'll tell you how I felt, and how Sullivan felt, and even others: Things are beginning to slack here. I don't have to tell you that; you've been through this thing before, and anyone who

has a pair of eyes can see that work has stopped on several improvements. The railroad folks have decided to put in as little as possible here, and the big general store folks from St. Louis have dropped their option on the Mercy street block, and announced that they are either going to Sawtooth City or to the new camp at Butternut. It ain't looking just right, and some of us are discouraged. I've never tried my hand at a wrinkle like yours over the range, but I'm game, as you know, for I've bet my money for years on a roulette wheel where the chances were thirty to one against me; and Sawtooth City can't be any worse than that. Honest, old man, if I could sell the Pioneer, I think I'd be ready to quit Lockwood now."

By this time the oil lamps were lit, and the two electric signs, one on a movie house, the other on the Lockwood Hotel, were making a feeble effort to mark a regular white way down Main street; but it was a failure. Lockwood City at night looked like the mudhole it was, and the poor lights only added to its dismal appearance. There were crowds of men and some women on the sidewalks; the pianos were being banged with more vigor and the key was higher and more discordant as the hours wore on. Railroad laborers, mostly foreigners, had come into town from their derailed cars where they lived while bal-

lasting up the new right of way and putting in the concrete replacements at creeks, ravines and waterholes; women, save the remark, were there, on the street, but with a few exceptions were the outcasts who sought with paint and powder and gaudy dress to cover the marks of dissipation drawn upon their faces by years of dissolute life farther east, where they no longer could by any feminine device attract the attention necessary to their mode of livelihood.

Mayor Ellarson, Judge Dixon, Baxter and Lean Bacon Johnson, escorted by Mayor Crandall were shown a hurdy-gurdy in full operation, taken into a keno room and finally to a faro bank.

"These things," said Crandall, finally, "were necessary, we thought, at the start; but now I'm frank to say, we'd like to get rid of 'em. And judging from what we are hearing the past few weeks it won't be necessary for us to start any clean-up campaigns—they'll all go as soon as the money goes somewhere else. But, neighbors, Lockwood was a hummer when she was going, and several fortunes have been made here in real estate."

"Oh yes," spoke up Billings, who stayed with the visitors. "But how many lost? What about all them lots out in Crandall's division? Some of them were sold on option a half hundred times

a day when the boom was on, and now the register of deeds is in such a mix-up that you can't get a decent title—there isn't a safe abstract in the division; and some of 'em downtown are so defective, due to their constant transfer, day after day during the boom, and no organization at the courthouse, that no one who wants to buy dare pay over a cent."

"Well," said Crandall, sorrowfully, "I don't know, honestly, to tell the truth, of anyone who is very much interested in buying, do you?"

"No, I don't, Mr. Mayor; in fact, it looks bad; but why wash our dirty linen here in front of our prosperous friends from over the hills? They're not interested in this kind of talk; they came over here to see what you and Sullivan and some of the rest of you call a live town. Guess they're seeing—well, if it isn't dead, it is breathing its last, and I know all the doctors who've had the case, too. They wouldn't listen to reason, and here's what you've got—a few damned dance-house pianos going, three dozen illegal saloons, a hurdy-gurdy dance hall, four gambling houses with a handful of poor workingmen handing over their earnings to sharks that will leave town as soon as they get next month's payrolls under their vests, and leave a dozen or two honest merchants who came here to live and do le-

gitimate business to an accumulation of bad debts, with no other alternative than to pull up and move farther west, or quit entirely.

"I tried to interfere with you—you know—but I was practically alone, and could get no support here or at the capital—they all believed we must have a hummer. Well, listen! Hear the pianos; hear the yells of the drunken men and women! It ought to wake you up." And then the sheriff got up and continued:

"It's eleven o'clock, Mr. Mayor," addressing Mr. Ellarson and glancing at the rest of the Sawtooth party; "I don't want to hurry you along, but I was to stay with you till this time and then escort you to the city limits on the state road. You'll need me, for we've got to make two or three detours to get you started straight. Otherwise, my services are of no value to you. Pete Baxter single-handed and alone could herd up this whole bunch—every man in town and with Harms and a few others in range of his six-shooter, march 'em all off to a corral. This is the damnedest deadest town in the United States of America, you hear me; and there isn't spirit enough left in one man in it to object if Pete told him to hop along."

"Mayor," spoke up Judge Dixon, "I move that we pass a vote of thanks to Mayor Crandall, Chief Sullivan, Jake Harms, Sheriff Billings, and

this whole town, for the splendid entertainment they have given us, and that we call our chauffeur and be on our way. What do you say?"

"I hardly know how to say what I want to; but will make the attempt. . . . Friends, we are really sorry to note an air of gloom among you; but you have been frankness itself, and we are not, I hope, trespassing upon your own privacy if we make a simple suggestion. It may hearten you somewhat to come over to Sawtooth for another visit. This time, though, we want all hands to come, as many as you like. We hesitate about saying much for fear of being misunderstood. But you know how we feel, what we have done, and what we plan to do. There is room, any time, for anybody—everybody in Lockwood City —even the fallen women—in Sawtooth. Every saloon keeper, every gambler, every prostitute in Lockwood City has here and now an official invitation to come to Sawtooth City. We turn no one away unless he or she refuses to work at some legal occupation. Thus far, I will say to you, we have in our community not a few men and women who plied unlawful trades or callings here and elsewhere along the line. They are doing well; we keep no rigid surveillance over them—only insisting upon lawful employment, obedience to the laws; and we even furnish them work."

When the Sawtooth party were ready to start

for home and were seated in their machine, a fine-looking man stepped up, accompanied by a couple of men who appeared to be railroaders. One who proved to be the local agent at Lockwood City asked:

"Is not Mayor Ellarson in this party?"

On the mayor being indicated by a nod of the head from Judge Dixon, the agent said:

"I am A. R. Baldwin, agent for the Mid-Continent, and I want to introduce our general manager, Samuel S. Parsons, who has just arrived in his office-car."

There were rapid-fire introductions all around, followed by a piece of good news for the Sawtoothites to take home with them; namely, this statement from Manager Parsons:

"I had planned to run over to Sawtooth tomorrow on one of the work trains which is operating on the last fill in the big bend through which Mountain Creek flows. You know I only know Sawtooth, the range and the right-of-way generally from the plans, but I am quite familiar with them nevertheless. I have only recently come on to this job from the Utah & Eastern, and my next duty is to become acquainted. I've heard a lot about your town, and the company has many plans under consideration for it. But the best information I have for you, gentlemen, is that one month from today, August 26th, we shall, if noth-

ing develops to prevent, which we do not foresee, enter Sawtooth City with a fully equipped and regularly scheduled passenger train. The time tables, already prepared, fix our arrival at 11 A. M., and we are anxious to co-operate with you, Mr. Mayor, and a committee in any plans you make. As a matter of fact, we shall be pleased to leave everything local to your judgment. I know it is to be a glorious occasion and I suppose you will arrange some sort of program. Just keep us informed, please, so that we may have things going well at every turn. If you need anything we have, that it is possible to supply, wire me—don't write—to my office in Gardnerville, and if I am not there, it will speedily find me on the road or wherever I am."

This was joyful news and after good-byes and good lucks not only to the general manager and his assistant, but to Mayor Crandall, Chief Sullivan, and Jake Harms, and a motley crowd of hangers-on, they started off on the hummocks of Main street, piloted by Billings who rode a sorrel horse like a cavalryman. They were soon on the new state road and, bidding good-bye to the sheriff, soon had the car breaking a record on the way home.

In the back end of the Crescent saloon at five next morning, long after Mayor Ellarson and

party had retired in their respective homes in Sawtooth City five leading citizens of Lockwood City still sat around a big table littered with glasses, cigar ashes and beer slop. For fully a minute not a word had been spoken. Five men twiddled their fingers or looked at the walls or ceilings, shuffled their feet uneasily, and yawned Finally one spoke. It was Mayor Crandall.

"Well, fellows, we've talked about this thing for six hours, and what is the decision? Not one of you will deny the things I've repeated dozens of times to you since midnight. They are these:

"It is the unanimous verdict of this informal gathering that we are a quintette and a faction of discounted, disgraced, disreputable and down-and-out would-be citizens of Lockwood; that we treated a couple of fine gentlemen in a mighty shabby manner—I refer to Mayor Ellarson and Judge Dixon—and that they demonstrated their superiority every time they batted an eye; a couple of us renewed an old acquaintance and found him to be so greatly improved—I refer to Baxter—that he outclasses us at every turn, not only as a gentleman, but as one who has lost none of the nerve he had when he was a bullpuncher. Furthermore, it is decided right now that Lockwood City is wobbly—it has got the shakes—and will soon be listed with the has-been towns of this fine country, whose projectors thought there was only

one way to do a thing, but nearly all of whom have discovered the mistake. In thirty days, the best part of this town will be located on the other side of the Sawtooth Mountains, and I am going to be included, for I've not been so foolish and so blind tonight, and for weeks, for that matter, as not to take note of what is happening, and to supply a reason for it. The events of last night put a finish to my plans—I'm going to Sawtooth City, well, pretty soon. How about the rest of you fellows?"

Harms and Sullivan both tried to speak at once, for both were eager to mount the band-wagon with the mayor, who, while advocating and promoting a lax government, encouraging gambling and liquor law evasion and other vices, was after all not wholly given over to disreputable things. He had been a contractor in Kansas, had some money, and when he came to Lockwood City had a good name, credit at the banks, youth—he was forty—and considerable business ability. He could re-enter the contracting business, and would, he said.

Harms, who had continued to drink heavily all night, was quite mellow but felt the blow that was falling. So did Sullivan who had also imbibed freely, but who saw the handwriting through it all. Suddenly he arose, walked around the table to where Harms sat with head resting on

his hands, elbows on the table, made a quick motion, and in a flash had "broken" the pistol he took off Harms' hip, took out the cartridges and placed them in a coat pocket. Harms never moved, but looked up, saying:

"What's up, Salty? Why——"

"Well, Harms," replied Sullivan; "I'll tell you; it's this: I've just begun to disarm every man in Lockwood City. You happen to be the first victim. That's all. There's going to be no more gun-plays in this town. It's all wrong—understand? Especially after last night. That was Lockwood's last performance. We may not make this as orderly a town as Sawtooth, but I'm going to do some practicing, boys, for my new job at Sawtooth."

Two others at the Crescent conference were the owners of the biggest gambling house in town—Tom Smith, and the other John Brockhausen, street commissioner, both of whom were leading lights in the city government, although Smith was not on the payroll. It was reversed—the other four were on his, and for good fat monthly amounts, too. He had come into the conference to say that his game in Lockwood was so poor that he must shut up shop; Brockhausen, an ex-paving contractor from Missouri, had during the early hours of the morning admitted that the

reet improvement appropriation had been ab-
olutely looted, and also brought a report from
ie city treasurer, Judson, that he hadn't a cent
f money, either of his own or the city's, and that
e was dying in the back room of an old house
n the edge of town, according to statements of
is doctor, from a combination of kidney dis-
ase and blood poisoning.

"I know of no one on earth who could untangle
ie city's affairs," said Crandall. "Practically
o books have been kept, no accountings of any
ind made—everything is chaotic. An expert
ight nail Judson for embezzlement, but if he
id he'd be a wizard—he never gave a receipt
r took one. He'll probably die, and that'll be
ie end of it.

"Brockhausen, what do you say—that we all
sign?"

Brockhausen, arising, said:

"Boys, there's but one way out of this thing
-I'm broke, and have spent every dollar of city
oney that came into my hands for booze and at
ie gambling tables. You say (turning to Sul-
van) that we've had the last gun-play in this
wn. You didn't take my gun, so here it is."

And with this he drew his weapon, pointed it
his right temple and pulled the trigger, falling
ead at the mayor's feet. It was all over but

the funeral, and that was a simple matter
night—only it was a double event, fo
died an hour later in his hovel.

Lockwood City was still on the map, a
Sullivan's task of disarming the populatic
a fair start. Going out the door of the
saloon while the sun was just rising, an
there was any stir on the streets except t
by a few drunken "all nighters" (wh
locked together, were staggering down
dle of the street), the mayor's party h
report of a pistol in the cross street ar
corner from the saloon. Sullivan, dra
gun, ran to the corner just in time to
Mahone, king of the Stockade, a dive
him on the outskirts of Lockwood, level
at a retreating figure and fire again. Hi
a gambler named "Tony," keeled over
street, dead. Sullivan got the drop on
and marched him back to the Crescent
was handcuffed and taken to jail, but
furnished bail.

"Guess I waited a bit too long," said
to Crandall, "with this disarming busines
makes the fourth murder in two weeks,
cides, and one lynching. But if this isn't
of this business, it isn't my fault." A
spoke he collected a half dozen guns from

half-drunken men who were hovering around the body of Tony.

There was a regular raid all that day that lasted far into the night. Sullivan and his twelve officers, and Billings and his deputies who gladly responded to his call, taking the town block for block and calling on every man met to hand over his arms. At nine that night there was a heap of revolvers, bowie knives, belts of cartridges and scabbards that almost filled a cell at the police station.

Two days later Sullivan received this message from Sawtooth City:

"Congratulations. You are doing fine. Now go after Mahone's dive—close it and send him away for life. Tell his women we are not anxious to have them here, but if there is no other place for them to go they can come here. They are human beings, and we will give them a chance that maybe some of them never have had.

"Baxter, chief."

Sullivan took the hint, and went after Mahone with an old warrant that had been pigeonholed, but when he found him, in the Metropolitan saloon, he was lying dead before the bar, his head resting upon the edge of a cuspidor where he had

fallen when George Stephens sent a bullet crashing through his brain.

Mahone had sent word a week before to Stephens that he (Mahone) would kill him on sight for having insulted his "woman."

Sullivan collected a pair of six shooters from the belt of the dead man and one from Stephens, and took the latter to jail.

Later on, partly upon the testimony of an editor who swore that Mahone had also threatened to kill him on sight, Stephens was finally given his freedom, and complimented by the court for having gotten the drop when Mahone attempted to carry out his threat. Thus was Crow county rid of its worst desperado.

CHAPTER III

A NIGHT IN SAWTOOTH CITY

(And a Morning After)

Ten thousand persons yelled themselves hoarse, waved flags, slapped one another on the back, danced, sang and even cried—all for joy. Cannon boomed, bells rang, whistles blew, men stood on roofs, boys on cross-trees of telegraph poles and cheered—all for joy—at eleven o'clock on the morning of August 26th, when the first scream of the siren on the Mid-Continent Railway Company's big Mogul engine, No. 2034, announced that it had reached the Sawtooth Valley from the winding curves of the mountain range between Little Tooth and Big Tooth.

And when the crowd saw the steam and smoke and heard the grinding of the brakes on the wheels, and spied the ten big steel coaches, baggage and express cars, slowing up over the big "fill" to the east of the city where the new filling was soft, with bunting on the locomotive, stream-

ers on the coaches and a face at every
ten thousand throats joined again in a m
that sounded for all the world like a
fans at the Polo grounds when a favori
has saved the day for the home team.

But when Engineer Crowley reached
grade across the Mountain Creek bott
again opened his whistle valve, set his l
ward, and the steam and black smoke
the air, the ten thousand fairly went wil
waved their flags, shouted and crowded
line of ropes that had been strung to
crowd off the tracks; and it was well th
tion had been taken and that regular p
and "extras" had been stationed every
along the roped-off enclosure.

On came No. 7, the first regularly s
passenger train to reach Sawtooth City
a pace that many exclaimed, "She's going
station!" But it didn't. It was in per
trol and the ponderous locomotive came
exactly at a whitewashed mark on th
platform.

Mayor Ellarson and a Citizen's Comm
One Hundred, badge-bedecked and in
clothes, were strung along the platform
General Manager Parsons, while a sub-c
of ten paid particular attention to Engine
ley and Conductor Hazard, and the re

train crew for whom special provision had been made.

Chief of Police Baxter, assisted by ex-Chief "Salty" Sullivan of Lockwood City, now Captain of detectives of Sawtooth City, remained outside a rope enclosure which made a corral in the middle of the street and the approach to the station from Bridger avenue to Aspen avenue, two city blocks. Into this by a V-shaped passage arranged at both ends of the platforms the length of the train, and ending into a narrow exit, the passengers were herded by smiling station men and volunteers chosen for the work. At the lower end of the V stood only Baxter and Sullivan, both in civilian attire, wearing high hats and carrying heavy walking sticks.

The general manager and his party passed out into the roped-off space with the committee. There were about one hundred and fifty of them all told, each visitor wearing a badge with a locomotive and train of cars printed upon it.

Next came a coach-load of what was unmistakably an unofficial delegation from every corner of the earth—all foreigners, some with the smell of the ship's bilgewater still upon them, although at least a week from either coast. They were directed to a large waiting room and interpreters took charge.

Following came an official delegation from

Lockwood City—a lone man, immediately recognized as Mayor Crandall.

Not far behind him, but not with him, came familiar faces—other Lockwoodites. The mayor joined the Ellarson committee, but his fellow-townsmen were carefully tolled through the bottom of the V formed by the ropes and detained briefly in the open corral on the station approach. There were a couple of hundred of them; of this number fifteen women, none of whom resembled in any way any of their sex in Sawtooth City.

After the last passenger had passed through the V formed by the ropes Sullivan, spying Mayor Crandall near-by saluted and shouted:

"Where's Jake?"

Coming close up Crandall spoke in a low tone of voice saying:

"Poor Jake Harms! Well, Salty, after you left he acted as if he'd lost his last friend on earth; he couldn't let loose of the Pioneer for there wasn't a buyer in sight; his barroom was deserted by everyone but a gang of non-producing roughnecks, and he lost his grip entirely—started to drink up all the booze in the place and some of that owned by his neighbors across the way. Finally that bartender who slicks his black hair down over his forehead in a sweep that looks like a piece of breeching on a six-mule team—Ed Watson, I mean—finally bought him out. Jake had

been saying all day that he didn't believe there was $500 in Lockwood City, if there was, someone would offer it to him for the saloon and contents and his lease of the Pioneer.

"Finally Watson discovered that Jake was in earnest, and asked him if he'd really sell for $500, and Jake said 'Show me the money and I'll give you a clean bill of sale, letting the bills due to date follow me to Sawtooth.'

"Say, Salty, what do you think Ed Watson did? When Jake's back was turned he pulled out a roll as big as his arm at the elbow, peeled off $500 and slapped it down on the bar, saying, 'Come on with your bill of sale; here's the money!'

"And in ten minutes the place changed hands, or as Ed worded it on a canvas sign strung across the front windows, 'This Place Has Changed Feet and Heads.'

"Jake has been stupid drunk ever since and was of course unable to make the train. He's in the hands of Dr. Hinz, though, and the doctor says he'll straighten him up in a couple of days and he'll have another stake of $500 that I've planned for him to get from Watson.

"It's this way, Salty: Ed in his exuberance, let the cat out o' the bag to me, saying 'Mayor, this was easy—Jake bought himself out.' 'How's that?' said I. 'Why, I paid him in his own—But, say, Mayor, I'm not going to plead guilty—this is

all in confidence; and if Jake thinks he's got the worst of it I'll give him another $500.' So I arranged it with the Sawtooth National by 'phone, and they've got the cash. Everyone's satisfied, and I really believe Jake got a fair price for his property, even though every cent he got was stolen from him; if it hadn't been, he'd played it away in the Crystal Palace as fast as it came in. I'll see to it that he reaches Sawtooth on his feet; and that his credit is good for $500 you know after what I've told you. He's strong as an ox, and when sober a mighty good man to have around.

"Yes, sir, Salty, Jake sold his saloon and took his own money in payment for it."

The fifteen women from Lockwood were escorted to a room in the station where a committee of five Sawtooth City ladies, all members of the Mayor's Civic Committee, appointed several weeks previously, took the newcomers in hand. Mrs. Thornton was the spokesman and shook hands with every one of the women, smiling pleasantly and informing them that they, the committee women, were duly appointed city officials; that their duties were numerous, but for this day they had been instructed by the mayor to see that all lady visitors were properly met and entertained.

When all had been seated Mrs. Thornton arose and in a firm but pleasant motherly voice said:

"Sawtooth City is making a good name for itself, and in order that nothing shall happen to interrupt its onward march it has determined that there must be no drones, idlers, or criminals within the city limits. We all work at some legitimate calling and our doors are wide open to as many thousands of men and women as wish to come here and locate and work with us for themselves primarily, but incidentally for the community.

"We have especial advantages here for good women; many opportunities; none for the other kind.

"Sawtooth is a poor field for gambling, bootlegging or prostitution; it is a good place for milliners, dressmakers, cooks, housemaids, hotel and restaurant waitresses—housewives.

"Are there any among you who are looking for these or other employments? If so, speak up, and members of this committee will conduct you to the City Hall where we maintain a bureau, and instantly provide you with employment."

One of the women, known to Lockwood City and in the valley as "Queen Elizabeth," a heavy-set, middle-aged person, with the voice of a man, arose, and fairly yelled:

"What do you mean—do you intend to force

me to submit to some plan you women have mapped out? Do you intend, if we refuse to work, to tell us we can't stay here? Isn't this a free country? Well, I'll speak for myself, and tell you that I propose to do as I please"; and she started for the door just in time to meet Chief of Detectives Michael Sullivan, who greeted her as he always had with:

"Hello, Lizzie! What's up now? Don't you know this isn't Lockwood? You're in Sawtooth City—it's different, Liz, it's different. These ladies are city officials, and they have the police department back of them in anything they do."

"She," pointing to Mrs. Thornton, "says we've got to work if we stay here—where did she or you, either, get that line of stuff? Me work? Say, Salty Sullivan, I don't know how to boil potatoes, and I didn't come to Sawtooth to learn how, either!"

"Oh, yes you did," said Sullivan, smiling, "and you're going to be good about it, otherwise—and we're not going to be rough to you—your fare will be paid back to Lockwood. Every one of you," addressing the others, none of whom had uttered a word but wore serious expressions, "have got to go to work or leave town in one hour. I have officers ready to escort you to the train, and your baggage, occupying a whole truck, is all ready to shove back to the baggage car."

Elizabeth Connell (otherwise "Queen Elizabeth") had been advised long before this meeting not to try to move her establishment to Sawtooth. Sullivan himself had been approached on the subject by the so-called "Queen," and advised that there wasn't a chance in a million of getting even upon the streets with any such plan in view. Now she was in Sawtooth and meeting a situation that had never confronted her before. She had presided over stockaded joints in a half-dozen mining and cow camps, and once, at least, her name had appeared on a silver plate beneath a door-bell in a big Colorado town. Never before had she been thwarted, though more than once she had split her income with officials, and won a point in that way.

"Can I speak with you alone?" she finally asked in a half whisper, addressing Sullivan.

"Not in Sawtooth," replied Sullivan; "that might have been all right in Lockwood but here it's different, Lizzie. No, there's nothing doing like that."

A half-dozen bands were playing by this time in the big civic parade that had started from the side streets into the main avenue, and the music came into the room and died away as each band passed the grand-stand a block from the station. A lively tune set the feet of two of the younger ones of the fifteen in motion.

Sullivan left, saying to Mrs. Thornton that he would remain in calling distance for twenty minutes; that a tap on the window on the platform side of the station would bring him to her, and that if by that time she had not come to an understanding with her guests he would send a couple of officers to her who would execute whatever orders she had to give.

The "Queen" was showing signs of weakening when she said, as Sullivan left:

"Sullivan is different, too; gee, everybody's different in this town—but I can't be different. How can I? Who's going to believe me if I say I'll go to work? I've got enough money to pay my way in this town for a year without doing anything, anyway; and besides if I can't stay here I can go somewhere else. But how about these girls? I may be bad, but I'm not bad enough to desert them. There isn't a hundred dollars in the bunch. Some of them can work—I know that, and if they want to I'm not going to object.

"But, say, honest, Salty Sullivan looks like a reg'lar gent in that plug hat."

Then she haw-hawed like a man.

"Well," spoke up little Mrs. Langworthy, whose silence was proverbial, "I'll tell you something you seem to have overlooked. There is not the slightest antagonism to you here, and no ill-feeling. You yourself begin to note that things

are different. They are, decidedly. Here we are ready and willing to welcome you in a really sisterly way to our beautiful new town, of which we are very proud and in which we all have a deep interest. It is a wonderful community, and its doors are closed against no living human being, no matter where he or she comes from, whether palace or dive; we here in Sawtooth are having the most unique funerals every day—burying the past. Some of our best men, those we trust most, have not always been trustworthy from our viewpoint at least. Within the past two months women have come here to be on hand when this event took place, and for no good purpose. We have, through the expert work of our police department met and talked with every one of these women. Nine of them are citizens of Sawtooth, engaged in lawful employments; only one has decided to accept the alternative—departure.

"It is not our intention to keep you—if you stay here—under close surveillance, or to label you or to do anything that would indicate to the general public that you are not—or have not been, rather,—what you ought to be. All any of you have to do is to say you are here for a good and lawful purpose; that you will accept employment of some kind——"

"I'm ready to go to work this very minute," spoke up a young woman, "what are we waiting

for? I'm willing to wash dishes or scrub, but I'll tell you I can embroider beautifully."

Two others,—one with tears streaming down her painted face—fairly rushed to Mrs. Langworthy and begged to be given a chance, and within a few minutes all, with the exception of the "Queen," had urged the committee to take them to the City Hall employment bureau.

Madam Elizabeth, however, wanted to argue. "Can't I go to the bank with this money?" she asked, "I've got five thousand dollars here——" opening her bag "and I really need protection. How do I know some one won't hold me up, even on the train, if I try to go back to Lockwood alone?"

"We will go to the bank with you," said Mrs. Thornton; "in fact, I think you really ought to be there now with all that money. I will call Mr. Sullivan and ask him to furnish you an ununiformed officer as escort. You'd better go right away; but if you prefer I'll go with you. Really, though, there is no danger of robbery in Sawtooth City, for it's different here."

Such concern for her welfare, and willingness of Mrs. Thornton to be seen with her on the street, astounded the "Queen."

"Do you mean it?" she said incredulously.

"Of course I do; and then you go to the Valley Hotel and the rest of the committee will meet us

there at two o'clock and we will talk things over. We don't want to be patronizing and we don't intend to embarrass you in the least. When you have decided on your plans—whether you want to stay in Sawtooth, and what you intend to do, you'll hear no more from us unless you want help or advice. Haven't you ever had a legitimate calling?"

"Yes, yes, I have," she said slowly, looking out of the window. "Do you see that gown?" pointing to a woman passing. "Well, it is a fine one—latest mode. Ten years ago . . . I was a modiste in New York . . . I wonder . . . No my name would kill me dead, and I'd lose every dollar I invested if I opened a shop in Sawtooth.

"You ladies all know me—who I am. How many of you would patronize me, and ask your friends to do the same? That's the idea."

Five members of the Civic Committee spoke at once, and what each one said was to the same effect.

Dressmakers were scarce, milliners ditto. "Try it, try it!" shouted Mrs. Thornton. "Do, oh, do!" spoke up Mrs. Langworthy.

Every one of the committee agreed to patronize Elizabeth Connell, modiste, and act as solicitor for her, too.

"Why not employ some of these girls," said one.

"We'll talk about that later," replied the "Queen," smiling for the first time, and softening her voice. "But I want to get to that bank."

A tap on the window brought Sullivan, and at a glance he knew the Committee had won.

"Fine!" he shouted, "fine!" when told by Mrs. Thornton about the proposed trip to the bank. "Let her go alone," he said, "if she told you she'd be square take my word for it, Mrs. Thornton, she will. I know her. You might attract attention that would hurt Lizzie if you went with her. If she said she'd meet you at the Valley she'll do it, won't you, Lizzie Connell?"

"Yes, but I haven't said I would, not yet . . . but I *do* say it, and when we meet there I'll say more and more and more, and it can be depended upon."

Her jaw was set when she passed beyond the ropes with Mrs. Thornton's explicit directions to the bank and with a brief note from her to Cashier Wiler saying that it would be all right to accept her account.

"Think of it!" said the "Queen" to herself as she passed out of the roped arena, "that's the longest conversation I've had with a decent woman in five years!"

The one good spot in Lizzie Connell had been reached. The spark had been ignited, and as she rushed down the street, she did not see the crowd

at all, or hear the bands or fife and drum corps, or the street fakirs or anything.

"Think of it!" she repeated to herself—"think of it!"

The Valley Hotel was packed, and two smaller hotels were filled with cots. Restaurants were crowded. Men stood in line at the Valley dining room, but the service was slow and hungry men were being turned away because they could not be served, when Mrs. Thornton, leading the way, marched through the lobby with twelve young women, asked for Landlord Drake, found him, and quickly said:

"Here are some young women who will wait on your tables today, maybe tomorrow, and maybe for a long time. It is for you to say; and it will depend largely upon you whether they succeed. Two of them are experts, having at one time been head dining room girls in big hotels. Three others have been waitresses; the others have had no experience. Get them into your kitchen right away, ask no questions of me or of them—put them to work at once. If you haven't aprons for them, I'll have some here as soon as I can run over to the Glass Block and buy them—but don't delay, don't talk, just get them busy."

Drake had no aprons; the bewildered landlord had, in fact, only five waitresses and they furnished their own aprons. In ten minutes, Mrs.

Thornton was back and in the kitchen tying aprons on the smiling girls, giving them motherly words of advice about their work and conduct. The Valley's head waitress lined up the delegation, finally, and gave them instructions.

"Now, gals," she began, "there's two doors between this kitchen and the dining room, one leading *into* the kitchen, the other *into* the dining room. If one of you goes wrong there's likely to be a collision, and that wouldn't do. When you come into the kitchen from the dining room, take the right-hand door; when you go into the dining room, take the right hand door; always the right-hand one remember; take no nonsense from the guests. Some of 'em is playful, but as a rule they are polite and all right. Never mind what they say about anything, except what they order. Keep your ears open for that, and at the start take only two orders at one time."

There was too much excitement in the crowd about other matters for more than a half dozen men to take note of what was going on in the Valley kitchen or dining room. Mayor Ellarson had just finished his address of welcome to General Manager Parsons in the City Park, and the Committee of One Hundred and the railroad officials and other distinguished guests had just arrived in the lobby, and all were discussing a sen-

sational announcement that the mayor had made at the conclusion of his address, namely:

"Gentlemen, the Mid-Continent Company's representatives have this day informed me that work on the Valley branch connecting Sawtooth City with Buckhorn will begin next Monday morning; that five thousand men have already started from eastern points for the Sawtooth Valley. They are to live in camps here and down the Valley. Many of them are immigrants, but recently from the better parts of Europe—and they have accepted employment with the company for the purpose of getting a start in this new country. Many are from the dykes of Holland, others from Northern Italy, some from the British Isles and others from the Scandinavian countries. But this is not all, fellow citizens—

"Governor Taylor wired me today that he had included in his call for an extra session of the Legislature, called to correct the errors in the so-called Railroad and Tax Act passed last winter, the proposition to remove the county seat from Bordertown to Sawtooth City. Bordertown is beyond reach of any railroad that will ever be built, as we all know, and the county seat was located there long before there was a county organization. There is absolutely no opposition to the change, and you may celebrate now. We will

have a Court House on land the Ellarson-Thornton Sawtooth Corporation has set aside for that purpose."

Therefore, while this information was being discussed there was no disposition on the part of the crowd to take much note of a delegation of women marching into the hotel. However, there were two or three men in the lobby who hadn't lived in one town all their lives; and as one of them remarked to another, "This looks like Lockwood, or I'll be blamed! Say, boy, Sawtooth is catching on—what did I tell you? . . . I know that blonde; and I've seen the little sawed-off one lots of times. Me for the dining room. Wonder where they're going to sit?"

And the two men entered the dining room just as the new waitresses passed into the kitchen.

"What does this mean?" said one.

"Don't ask me."

"What kind of a house is this, anyway?" he added in an appealing voice to a group of men waiting to be seated.

"The house is all right," replied a young man; "why? Nothing wrong only this is an extraordinary occasion; that's all—got more than they bargained for, I guess, and have been rounding up some extra help."

The two winked and blinked and helped them-

selves to two conspicuous seats at a table where four others were seated. It was a long wait, and the dining room was nearly filled with men, there being not more than seven or eight women. It seemed to be understood, and everyone was good-natured about it, that there was an unavoidable delay. A few were being served.

Finally the door from the kitchen opened and the head-waitress entered, followed by the twelve girls. Every face was clean—no paint; hair in order, and their new aprons, uniform in style, held by straps over their shoulders, gave them the appearance of professionals. They scattered at the direction of the head-waitress to the four corners of the big dining room and began to take orders from the menu card.

The two strangers were alert and observing every move.

"The sawed-off one is coming to our table," said one, nudging his companion. "Bet you two to one she speaks to me! I've got her eye—no, she's looking the other way—at the head-waitress; the head-waitress nods her head, meaning, of course, come to this table. I win; here she comes. Watch me, Dudley, watch me! Oh boy!"

And then the girl walked straight to the speaker, handed him a menu card from the table and looked over his head.

"I'll take your order, if you please," she said quietly.

"You will, eh?" he replied, reaching out his hand; "but why not shake first—recognize your old friend?"

"Please," said the girl; that was all.

"What's the matter, Shorty?"

"Your order—give it to me quick or I shall move on."

"Listen to her!"

His voice was now raised, but the girl stood still and looked appealingly at his companion, who said:

"Cut it out, Dud, cut it out!"

"Yes," chimed in a quiet-spoken man at the far end of the table, "cut it out; and do it quick!"

"Not if Dud knows himself—why shouldn't I talk to this girl? She knows——"

Then the quiet man arose, came over to "Dud", took him by the scruff of the neck, dragged him to the office door, thence through the lobby to the street into which he threw him as he would a stick of cord wood, saying:

"Come back when you are ready to behave like a gentleman in the presence of ladies."

It was Pete Baxter who furnished this timely entertainment and example for anyone else who might be tempted to presume on his previous

acquaintanceship with any of Landlord Drake's new waitresses.

Train No. 7 which brought the first passengers to Sawtooth City was not the only one to come in. No. 7 ran in three sections; a few dozen came over the auto road from Buckhorn. Bordertown must have been deserted, for by night Chief Baxter had listed all but twenty-five of its citizens—most of them as suspicious characters, or at least worth watching. In the number were two former members of the Lima Bean Poker Club, good fellows, too, "in a way," as Pete said, but crooked in a card game, and not above using a hair-cloth sleeve or any other device for producing an ace at the necessary moment or "drowning" a deuce or nine-spot.

By sundown Landlord Drake had been offered all the way from $25 to $100 for the use of a room for the night by men he knew to be gamblers; but they were not from Lockwood. That source of trouble had been attended to by Chief of Detectives Sullivan who had turned back a dozen card sharks who came on No. 7 and a seven-passenger car with eight passengers who traveled the telegraph road through the sagebrush followed by a two-ton truck with a roulette wheel and a faro table. Baxter and Sullivan had slipped slightly in not taking precautions against

Buckhorn and Bordertown, which places, while reputed to be dead, still harbored a few of the old-timers who gambled for a livelihood.

Up to six o'clock not one drunken man had been picked up, although the police force had taken to the station a dozen bottles of whisky and one demijohn they had seized.

"We may have some trouble with gamblers," said the mayor to Baxter, "before the night is over, but this is a sober crowd, so far as liquor is concerned."

"I never saw more excitement or enthusiasm, either," he said to a reporter for the *Sun*, "and everyone seems to be enjoying himself—even those fellows from Lockwood. If everyone isn't in bed in Sawtooth City by twelve tonight I'll be surprised."

Mayor Crandall of Lockwood was invited to ride with Mayor Ellarson in his municipal car, and to stay with him until midnight and did so. At ten o'clock they stopped in front of the Valley Hotel and Baxter and Sullivan reported:

"It seems almost ridiculous," said Baxter, "but we've got just one prisoner in the jug—a poor, half-witted boy who came over from Buckhorn with a bottle of whisky. He's our only drunk. The only disorderly case I have to report is on myself. A loafer named Dudley was fresh with one of the new dining-room girls at the Valley and

I threw him out. He came up to the station an hour ago and asked me to protect him; said a hundred of our town fellows had promised to do everything they could think of to him—everything from a good lickin' to tar and feathers and lynching. So I told him to go to Drake and apologize for insulting the young lady, and Drake said he did, and that he told the girl, who acted very nice about it. Drake says the girls are fine, not a dish was broken, no one insulted any of 'em again, and they are as happy as a lot of kids in the big unfinished top story where he has quartered them. The head-waitress has already appointed two of the girls assistants, and they've signed up at $50 a month and board. All the others, except three, will stick right along. These three are milliners or dressmakers, and are going to work for Queen—Miss Lizzie Connell, Mrs. Thornton says. She's going to reopen the dressmaking parlors on Aspen street, near the postoffice—the place that that French woman had just started when she up and died. She paid $450 cash for it to a brother of the French woman who came on here from Salt Lake, and planked down a check on the Sawtooth National for it. What d'ye think o' that?"

"Say," continued Baxter, as the car moved off down Main street, "you'd never in your life think that woman had been the keep——"

"Shut up, Baxter, shut up!" commanded Mayor Ellarson; "we've got to get into the practice—the habit—of forgetting; and I want to tell you something: it is as good as a city ordinance passed by the Board of Aldermen, signed by the Mayor and City Clerk, and duly published in the official paper, this unwritten law of ours here in Sawtooth City, entitled 'Forget it,' or as I would have said when I first came to the valley and practiced on everyone with my alleged wise sayings—'Let bygones be bygones.'"

"You're right, mayor, and if I hear one word out of any man that reflects on a single one of these wimmen, I'll—I'll—use my new night stick on his skull, and when I swing that piece of hickory it'll make more noise than a gun."

"Yes," suggested Sullivan, "it is up to us. We can't afford to make a slip on this job. Evidently we're going to have little to do with gamblers and bootleggers or thieves or gun-men, and it is going to give us time a-plenty to protect the people who have come here to work and to build up themselves and the town. I have put my two best plain clothes men on the job and instructed them to not only see that these women are not annoyed, but that they have perfect freedom, as both you and Mrs. Thornton have suggested. I have told these two officers that they must give it out among the men about town that these

girls, Miss Connell and all women, no matter who they are, will be protected against insult, and that any man who misbehaves in this respect will find himself before Judge Dixon in short order. The Judge says it will be more than a fine on conviction.

"By the way, Mr. Mayor, the Judge went home sick this afternoon; did you know it?"

"Yes, I knew it. I was with him. He is not sick, really, although the news he received has almost wrecked him. Just between us he received a wire from Ohio saying that his father had died, and he left an hour ago on No. 6, eastbound. It is too bad. He is the only child and hadn't seen his father in four years; nor his mother. He may have a big problem to solve. Well, he'll solve it if he has."

"Yes, you bet," declared Baxter.

"Judge Dixon? Well, I guess so," said Sullivan. "Leave it to him; I'll bet he's good to his mother."

Eleven o'clock, and the streets of Sawtooth City, beautifully lighted by electricity, bunting, flapping in a cool summer night's breeze from the mountains after a warm day, were almost deserted. One by one the lights began to go out. The mayor sent George Coon home with the car, saying he preferred to walk for the next hour with Mayor Crandall, Baxter and Sullivan.

Therefore they strolled along aimlessly, discussing the events of the day, when suddenly from a dark spot in the block where they had stopped there was a flash of light in a ground-floor window that lit up a big room. It was in a private house. Several men could be seen wearing their hats. Then the curtains were pulled down, leaving only a streak of light around the edge.

"Who lives here, Baxter; isn't this Monte Allison's house?" asked the mayor.

"He lives at 231, I'll see," and stepping through an open picketed gate he noted the number. "Yes," he said, "Monte lives here."

"All right, men, I purposely brought you around here, afoot, so as not to make a noise or attract attention. This is a gambling house. Use your own judgment—use your wits. Good night."

And the two mayors walked away.

It has undoubtedly been made apparent thus far in this story that the one bad break one could make in Sawtooth City would be to gossip. The town's population was, as we all know, not composed wholly of men with records or women with pasts. Faults all of them had—grievous ones, too—as men and women have faults elsewhere, everywhere, no more and no worse, not a whit; but it so happens that Sawtooth's groundwork of man power, at least, was composed of that

hardy, rough and ready character who went into the wilderness of sagebrush, forest, or desert, or sidehill of soil that could only be tilled by water supplied through irrigation. These men, in this case, with a few exceptions, were mere children in world experience. Their lives might have begun in settled communities, offering schooling and social advantages; but largely these things were remote with the men who settled in the Sawtooth Valley and waited for men of genius to come and furnish the means for making the barren lands bloom. Fate, however, sent Isaac Thomas Ellarson to this valley, as it did Mrs. Thornton and a few others mentioned in earlier chapters, mostly men and women who, seeing agriculture—their natural means of livelihood—being displaced by factories in Massachusetts and other New England states—struck off into what was almost an unknown land hoping to there build up new homes and perhaps fortunes.

And it happened that this handful of men and women were wise in their day, and while sure that honesty, sobriety and industry were not their exclusive possessions, they appreciated that those they went amongst on the rough frontier were no less disposed to live good orderly lives than themselves, even though they did not always lead them. For this reason, they did not for example, narrowly mass their strength of intelligence against

ignorance—take the case of Pete Baxter, for example—and declare that reform must be immediate, and that all who opposed should be outcasts.

Gambling and drinking had flourished unmolested for years until the valley begun to grow, and those who gambled and drank or spent their time in idleness, began to note the prosperity of the industrious newcomers. And they liked their new neighbors because the new neighbors were neighborly, and not only clean-minded but fair in all their dealings.

Is it any wonder then that a handful of men and women, not more than eight, should have the power for good that we have noted; that even though Isaac Thomas Ellarson had practiced some deceit, he should, when the broadness of his character began to shine after his experience with the would-be assassin, Atkins, become a powerfully influential man?

Monte Allison, before whose home Baxter and Sullivan now stood, had been in the valley for ten years, first a freighter, later the driver of a stage, and at odd hours—his nights—a faro dealer. Soon after Isaac Ellarson came to the valley Allison had him on the stage-line in his dilapidated old Concord, drawn by four horses, and had entertained the newcomer with fascinating tales of the pioneer days—the days of the

Sioux, the Cheyenne and the Arapahoe, the overland freight trains drawn by long teams of oxen, the "road agents," and their robberies, and pointed out along the way the graves of argonauts who, headed for the Eldorado in the hills, had died of thirst, starvation, or from the poisoned arrow of a painted warrior; of the day when a buffalo robe took the place of a $10 note in trade, or a pinch of gold-dust paid for a meal at a desert stage-station; or when a ninety-eight pound bag of flour—long years before the word "profiteer" was coined—cost a clean $100 bill, no robes taken, no trade, nothing but bank notes, golden eagles or dust.

The young New Yorker was fascinated with Monte Allison, and while Allison did not live in the valley, met him often as he sped his four horses and rumbling old coach over the trails back and forth between Warm Springs and what is now Lockwood. Ellarson was very fond of Monte Allison, and when it came to him during the busiest part of the day, from a reliable source, that a roulette wheel and other gambling paraphernalia had been taken to Monte's home where his wife and one child lived, he was not only amazed, he was sorrowful.

Only a few hours before, at the station, when the first section of No. 7 arrived Monte had congratulated him on his success, and thanked him

for an early tip on real estate that put a small fortune in his pocket. He had said:

"Mayor, I've gambled for twenty years. I sat in my last game of poker at Warm Springs six months ago; now I'm a business man. Did you see my real estate sign—in electric bulbs—on Arapahoe street? It will be lit up tonight for the first time. And I want to thank you for putting my name on the Committee of One Hundred. It pleased my wife powerfully."

The mayor, as he walked away with Crandall, repeated this—not to Crandall—but to himself. He was dumbfounded, and Crandall was too much of a gentleman to break into a silence that he saw was deep and disturbing.

The mayor at this time, although having nearly completed a fine house facing Valley View Park, was living at the Valley Hotel, and there he strolled with Crandall. They sat apart from the crowd in the lobby for a few moments, and then parted for the night, Crandall taking the key from the clerk and starting for the stairway to the parlor floor.

"Before you go to bed, Crandall," said Mayor Ellarson, "I feel that I must make some sort of explanation to you in regard to my silence the last hour. The fact is, Crandall, I have heard some very disappointing news—sad news—about a dear good friend. Forgive me."

"Never mind," said Crandall, "I understand—hope everything will come out all right in the morning."

In the morning—that's what Mayor Ellarson dreaded. Not so much because his determination to have no gambling had been thwarted, but because Monte Allison had been false—had played him double, and that for once he (Ellarson) had misjudged a man for whom he had planned a great future all unknown to the man himself.

Going to his room he threw himself down upon the bed, without undressing, and overcome with the fatigue caused by the strenuous program of the day, fell into a sound sleep.

At three o'clock in the morning he was awakened by a loud rap at the door, and a voice, apparently in good control and not loud enough to disturb others in adjoining rooms, saying:

"Mr. Mayor, get up, quick—get up, Mr. Ellarson; this is Pete—Pete Baxter. Dress yourself and come down stairs. Do you hear?"

"Yes," replied the mayor, "what's up—what's happened? Is there a fire?"

"No, not a fire; but hurry—something else."

In another moment the door was opened and the mayor stood beside Chief Baxter in the hall.

"What is it, Pete? Did you raid Monte's house?"

"Yes, boss, we did—come on downstairs—

hurry——" and Baxter flew down the wide staircase ahead of him.

The mayor not fully awake, followed slowly, guiding himself with his left hand on the railing, and did not look up until he was below the ceiling of the office. Then he stopped and gazed upon the Committee of One Hundred—and Mayor Crandall, too. And here were the Reverend Gordon Roberts and Father O'Connor, and others, all apparently very happy.

Mayor Ellarson was positively feeble—stunned. He had really almost tottered down the stairway; and it was a condition brought on not only by fatigue of the day, but by sorrow and disappointment due to the fall from grace of a man from whom he had expected so much.

"What——" he started to say.

"Oh, he's a jolly good fellow," someone started, and all joined, while the mayor looked over their faces searchingly. Finally he came to Monte Allison at the very end, near the exit to Main street. Then Mayor Ellarson partly awoke. There stood Crandall who had gone to bed, now laughing and yelling and swinging his hat. But what was Monte doing here? Where was Sullivan?

Raising his hand and descending a few steps the Mayor said:

"Gentlemen, what does this mean? You have

awakened me from a sound sleep, and you will pardon me if I appear dumb—but say, men, what's up?"

Stepping down the front line of the committee which had formed in four lines of twenty-five each, to a point in the center, carrying a huge suitcase, Monte Allison met Mayor Crandall and set the suitcase at his feet, saying:

"I esteem it a great honor on this auspicious occasion to delegate to the mayor of Lockwood City the privilege of speaking for myself, the members of this committee and the citizens of Sawtooth City in general. Gentlemen, Mr. Crandall."

Stooping down Mayor Crandall spread the suitcase open flat upon the floor disclosing several hundred decks of playing cards and poker chips. He then said, addressing Mayor Ellarson:

"In the first place, Mayor Ellarson, I want to ask your forgiveness for playing a leading part in a little drama, the last act of which is about to have its curtain. I was selected to present to the Mayor of Sawtooth City these cards and an auto truck load of other gambling paraphernalia that has been collected quietly during the past week in Sawtooth City and its environs, including Peter Baxter's old place, the deserted irrigation warehouse, and a dugout on Mountain Creek, by the Honorable Monte Cristo Allison. This prop-

erty includes, I am told, one of the finest gambling outfits ever seen in this part of the country, brought here a few months ago by a man now loved, honored and respected by all of us. He directed Mr. Allison to its hiding place today, and later left for Ohio, being called away suddenly.

It is now proposed that, headed by the mayor of Sawtooth City, we all, at this witching hour of about four A. M., just before the sun rises, proceed to the City Hall and on the cement walk build a bonfire. I, myself, would be pleased to strike the match that will, I hope, burn to ashes these implements of an almost uncivilized past; but that honor has been left to Mayor Ellarson.

"Before forming in line behind the truck, however, I have another pleasant duty to perform, which is the presentation to Mayor Ellarson, on behalf of the Committee of One Hundred, representing some eight thousand contributors, this handsome diamond studded Tiffany timepiece, as a token of love and esteem.

"It is the belief of every man present, and of thousands of others who could not for various reasons be here, that to the Honorable Isaac Thomas Ellarson, more than to any living human being, are we all under obligation for what we have—the beautiful, orderly, prosperous City of Sawtooth."

And with this, Mayor Ellarson, with eyes glistening, came down to the floor.

"Before I even touch this splendid present—before I even look at it, I must grasp the hand of Monte Allison, look him in the eye, ask his forgiveness for believing for a moment such a crude lie as he doubtless helped to fabricate about himself. This experience, friends, has taught me a lesson on this text: Be not too quick to judge, one that Ben Franklin put in circulation; and determines me forever after this to insist upon the newer requirement: Show me! especially where a friend is concerned.

"Now, gentlemen, I'm ready for the march to the City Hall and the bonfire; but before I go I want to say something about the ladies—what they have done to make Sawtooth City great. Shouldn't they be included—remembered in some way?"

"Never mind about the ladies," shouted Crandall, "we attended to that while you were sound asleep. A string of pearls long enough for a lariat was put around *her* neck. That's something you missed."





BOOK III



CHAPTER I

REAL COÖPERATION—BROTHERHOOD

The Reverend Gordon Roberts of the First Methodist Episcopal church had, before Sawtooth City appeared on the map, been an evangelist, living in mining camps in various parts of the West, devoting most of his time to work in Welsh settlements. He himself had in his youth been a miner in a colliery in Wales, and like many another Welshman, had a rich voice for song as well as sermons. He pronounced his own name Roe-barts.

But the stampede to Sawtooth Valley had swept him off his territory, away from his Cornish and other friends into a community where almost everything was new to him; and at first it saddened him to discover that there were few Welshmen in the valley; not enough, he found in making a census in organizing his flock, to make even a semblance of an eisteddfodd, to say nothing of a church choir. When he determined to locate permanently in Sawtooth City it was easy for him to get an assignment to the territory from the gen-

eral conference; in fact, that body was glad enough to give him a transfer from his field in the Deer Lodge district.

The Reverend Father James O'Connor had preceded Mr. Roberts by several weeks to the new community and had, when Mr. Roberts arrived, already laid the foundation for his little church and parish house upon two 60x120 foot lots set aside by the Ellarson-Thornton Corporation, and by the time Dr. Roberts had chosen his location had begun to administer to a flock of one hundred communicants, included in about forty-five families.

Dr. Roberts, for a few weeks, devoted his time to talks to crowds on vacant lots and street corners, and by his good-natured stories and fine singing, soon had a following among all classes and creeds.

Father O'Connor was a "mixer" also, a kind of priest who by his broad views and interest in public affairs in Idaho, whence he came, had become a great favorite. He came to Sawtooth with a large delegation of old friends and quickly became an influential member of the community. Mayor Ellarson at once saw the advantage to the city of the coöperation of these two fine men, and secured it by the display of his usual diplomacy. There were other preachers—a full dozen—in Sawtooth City, either in their pulpits or planning

church organizations or buildings when the first train entered the city; but none of them, except a Polish priest, the Reverend Father Wyjokofski, who built later on the double-towered St. Stanislaus church, took prominent part in public affairs. Father Wyjokofski ultimately had the biggest congregation in the valley, and as it grew he was compelled gradually to separate himself from affairs that related to the city as a whole. However, before that time arrived he was a great aid to the mayor.

Isaac Thomas Ellarson came from a family of Swedenborgians, but while having the advantage of the teachings, and access to a library of the great seer's works, both in Latin and English texts, he had never made any profession as a religious man, though he had been a student under parental instruction; that is to say, he had never, after going to the University, attended the church of his parents, saying that he preferred to hold the beliefs and practice them without too much discussion and with no outward display, except in his conduct, which he once said to Dr. Roberts was as good as he could make it. He was a sincere believer in the future life—that was the one thing he had acquired by his boyhood teachings; but religious discussion was distasteful to him because he couldn't possibly agree with everyone, and "the time was usually wasted." He did

say, at one time, to Dr. Roberts and the Reverend O'Connor who both chanced to visit his office at the same time on different errands:

"While I believe most churches are on the wrong track, nevertheless I know of none that is doing a positive injury to humanity; all have a place to fill, a duty to perform, and their basic principle—the saving of souls—is good. Too much dogma is offensive to me; brotherhood appeals, I don't care who preaches it."

Both Father O'Connor and the Rev. Mr. Roberts liked this, for it meant, they readily noted, that with a man of such broad views, there was to be fair play and no prejudice. They knew this, however, before being told, for lots had been set aside by Mr. Ellarson and his company for more churches than Sawtooth would need, unless it should become a metropolis; in fact the Rev. Father O'Connor's errand to the mayor's office related to two vacant lots in the block where his church and clergy house had been built. These lots were owned by the Ellarson-Thornton corporation and were not considered particularly valuable for residence purposes. Father O'Connor wanted to buy them before they advanced in price, and was on hand with the money to pay for them at their advertised figure.

"Some day," he said, "we shall want a school

building, and ultimately a hospital, though we prefer to have the hospital at a higher point, perhaps beyond the city limits."

Mr. Ellarson had sent for a plot of the block and when Dr. Roberts called, instructed an attendant to usher him in. Here we have a Catholic priest, a Methodist preacher and a man of great influence but no religious label—just a believer in God and a lover of his fellow-man and the square deal—all examining a real-estate map in an effort to solve a problem of this kind.

The plot disclosed the fact that Judge Dixon had an option on the lots, which would expire in thirty days.

"The Judge is in the East," said the Mayor, "and I don't know whether I can reach him or not, but I'll try."

So he wired this mandatory message:

"Father O'Connor needs lots 26 and 27, block 19. Wire release your option."

That was all.

Then turning to Dr. Roberts the mayor said:

"This may be quite a loss to Dixon, but it can't be helped; I'll do something else for him to make it up."

"No," spoke up Dr. Roberts, "it can't possibly be a loss to the judge or you or to anyone. Men who do these things never lose. His reply

will be an unconditional release [and it was], and then you can sell them to Father O'Connor, but you won't."

"How do you know, doctor?"

"Because I know *you.*"

"But you don't; I'm going to sell them to Father O'Connor as custodian of the church."

"I expected," said Dr. Roberts, "you were going to say you would *give* them to my friend, Father O'Connor."

"Well," said the mayor, arising and rolling up the plot, "that's what I'm doing, but Father O'Connor will be obliged to pay me two dollars, a dollar for each lot, to make the transfer legal and a defense for me at the annual meeting of our company. I will put in the conveyance under the heading of price paid, 'One dollar and other considerations.' The 'other considerations' I already have, you have, all of us have here in Sawtooth, in the assistance Father O'Connor and his church have given us in upbuilding firmly . . .

"Doctor, what can I do for you?"

"I believe you'd give me the City Hall if I asked for it, but I'm not going to. It is much less, but important. . . . The big gale of wind last week laid low a large cottonwood tree directly across the street and gutter and sidewalk in front of our church; a hydrant on the corner is leaking and the water runs down to a low spot near

our basement and is gradually irrigating our children's assembly room, which we don't need, sir. It is a waste of water, too. The street commissioner and his men have so much to do that they can't remove the tree, and our people will either be obliged to climb over it next Sunday or stay away. Some of our elderly people are poor climbers. The hydrant ought to be fixed, and when I complained to the superintendent he said he couldn't do it himself; too busy, he said, and had no one to send.

"I'm a pretty good wood chopper myself and have cut away some of the trunk and branches of the tree; but I'm no plumber."

The mayor put on his hat, excused himself to Father O'Connor, accepted the reverend gentleman's profuse thanks for his generous treatment with his usual, "Oh, forget it!" and started out with Dr. Roberts.

"And where are you going, Mr. Mayor?" asked the priest.

"I'm going to see what I can do to relieve this situation down at Dr. Roberts' church."

"Well, if you've no objection, and Dr. Roberts has none, I'd like to go along."

And he did, with a warm welcome from both. Jumping into the municipal car, they soon landed at the Methodist Episcopal church, saw what was necessary, dispatched George Coon with the car

back to the City Hall for picks, shovels, spades and a cross-cut saw.

For three hours the mayor of Sawtooth, Dr. Roberts and Father O'Connor furnished entertainment for the neighbors who either viewed the spectacle from their windows or came across the street for a closeup of a remarkable show.

"If my people get tired of me," said Father O'Connor when the debris had been cleared away and the water was draining into the gutter, "will you give me a job?"

"You have my promise of a ward foremanship," said the mayor.

"And how about me?" asked Dr. Roberts.

"I'll make you an inspector, because you reported this thing to the right person at the right time."

"But in that case I would be Father O'Connor's critic, wouldn't I? Well, I'd prefer something else where we could dig side by side."

Dr. Roberts did not realize at this time the real significance of his words. They *would* dig together. However, all were exceptionally lighthearted and talked glowingly of Sawtooth's future, the scarcity of labor due to the work in the beet fields and in the fine new sugar mill; the freedom of the city from vice, and the disposition of everyone to do his or her level best to extend

the reputation of Sawtooth City. They had just begun to discuss the arrival in town of a new newspaper editor, with a press and types, when who of all men should show up but the editor of the *Sun,* now in its second year, as proudly disclosed by a pica line beside the title on the first page of the *Sun.*

"Well, well," said Editor Dolan, "here is a good story—the mayor, the good priest of St. Mary's and the Welsh evangelist doing a turn on a street improvement job!"

"All right," said the mayor, "go as far as you like; we don't care, do we?"

And the others, wiping the dripping perspiration from their faces, agreed, Father O'Connor saying:

"Only remember one thing, Dolan, be careful about your facts; you know your weakness is exaggeration and your fondness for your church, and don't say that Father O'Connor did most of the work, for this Welsh evangelistic miner and our good mayor have got me beat a mile. The mayor has been entertaining us with some expert talk about mule-raising, the doctor says it's reminded he is of the good old days in the coal holes in Wales; and all I could say, son, is that barring one occasion in my life, this is my first manual labor."

"Where did you work, Father; what did you work at on the one occasion?" eagerly queried the newspaper man.

"It was during an epidemic of a frightful disease, Dolan, in a big eastern city, when bodies in coffins accumulated so rapidly that the grave-diggers couldn't get them under ground even working double time, night and day.

"Since then I have been devoting all my time to digging one big grave, but not with a shovel, and some day, with the help of such fine men as his honor, the mayor, and Dr. Roberts, we'll have a fine funeral—we'll bury the divvil!"

Everyone laughed, and the editor started to leave, but the mayor stopped him.

"Of course, Dolan, you've heard that we are to have another newspaper in Sawtooth?"

"Oh, yes, I expected that weeks ago. Well, several have tried it, you know, and I'm the only one that has stuck it out. Let 'em come; I'll do nothing to impede the progress of Sawtooth. To tell you the truth there is room for one more good newspaper here, and I rather want to see another one as firmly established as mine. Anyway, I have preached duplication of everything from the day of my arrival to date, and I am consistent. I've met the new man and given him a cordial welcome."

"That's fine, Dolan; the right spirit," said the

mayor; "you'll never regret that kind of an attitude. None of us can have a monopoly here; if I knew of one I'd bust it if it took a leg."

Dolan had none too much of this world's goods. What he did possess was tied up in presses, types, etc., in his newspaper and job office, and he depended on its earnings for a living, which he was making by hard work. He had done even more than he mentioned when he met the new editor, Clarkson, who had brought in and was setting up a modern plant; he had told Clarkson that he wanted to be a good neighbor and expected to have to share this rich field with someone, so he was not disappointed to see him here. "Anything you need now or at any time, ask for it; if your press goes wrong any time, remember ours is there for you."

Clarkson was pleased and said so, and added:

"What you say goes both ways. Mechanical or other troubles you have I shall consider my own, neighbor. I know the spirit that prevails here—it's different."

But both Clarkson and Dolan couldn't possibly realize what their pledges meant. They were just ordinarily intelligent men of their class, imbued with the Sawtooth spirit; that was all.

CHAPTER II

SAWTOOTH CITY'S FIRST GREAT CALAMITY

"You look tired and worn, Isaac."

"Well, Abbie, there's two of us; but you women who work hard have a way of covering up that a man can't adopt; for example, a busy man doesn't shave! A woman dashes a bit of powder on her face, and if she is weary and worn, and her eyes sunken, the average man is not wise to the fact. The truth is, though, Abbie, you are overdoing and ought to take a rest."

"No, Isaac, you are the one who needs the rest. My, but you've got your hands full!"

"Yes, that's true, I have; but things have got to be done, and most of the man's work naturally is on my back—the responsibility, anyway, and you seem to be carrying the load for the fair sex. I've sure had a rushing time of it since the first train entered town. But, Abbie, I haven't been too busy to think of the one great subject that is close to both our hearts, and I wonder if we'll ever have a chance to make a few plans?"

"I hope so, Isaac—everything comes to him who waits."

"Now, you're kidding me."

"Oh, no, I'm not; but I don't wonder you are sensitive when you hear some of these familiar quotations."

"Well, anyway, I sent a check for $12,000 to the plumbing contractors this morning; and there's no kidding meant when I say that I'm keeping books and that $6,000 of it is charged to you! You see I'm guarding against a possibility of a mix-up on our finances, anyway."

"That's right, Isaac; but have you been to the new house the past few days? Oh, it is a wonderful home, and I know we are going to enjoy it."

"Yes, I drove the car up to the curb yesterday, and George Coon said something I didn't just fancy, though of course he was perfectly innocent of any intention of hurting my feelings, and I'll tell you I didn't let on a bit, either. He said, 'Mr. Mayor, this is a palace—the finest home in the valley—nothing in the neighborhood that touches it.' And you know, too, that there are some pretty fine homes in sight of ours, including that of Morris, the banker, and the one Lowther, the Glass Block man, has under way. You know, Abbie, I'm doubtful about our judgment in this matter. We can't *afford* to live in the finest home

in this valley, not because we haven't the money to pay for it or for the upkeep, but because——

"Yes, yes, I understand, Isaac—I see the point, and have seen it before; maybe we can sell it."

Isaac Thomas Ellarson and Mrs. Abigail Thornton were standing on the edge of the curb at the intersection of Aspen and Main streets. The mayor was on his way to the Valley Hotel for his supper—a late one, for it was nearly 7:30 o'clock and night was falling. Mrs. Thornton had just left a meeting of the Woman's Civic Club and had started for her home near Mountain Creek, the original best private residence in Sawtooth City, where she still lived with her two boys, a housekeeper and a maid.

"We'll have to talk some more about this," she said and started to walk away.

"Yes, and, while we are about it, we ought to discuss the matter that concerns us most, don't you think? That house is finished and furnished, and while no one has said a word I'm sure our friends—even those who know how busy we are with our city affairs—begin to wonder why——

"Well, they ought to be willing to wait if we are."

"Yes, indeed," said the mayor. . . . "But before you go I want to say something else:

"How are we going to keep the dust down on

these streets? It's terrible. Superintendent Smiley of the Water Plant 'phoned me an hour ago that he is having trouble with his force pumps; Dawson, the street commissioner, says the three sprinkling carts have been located on a side-track somewhere one hundred miles east; and look at the wind playing with that dust! Whew! let's step into a doorway."

They did, and watched a miniature cyclone toy with the small rubbish of the street. Two or three little spirals formed, skidding along and disintegrating. Then came a blast of wind from the northwest that felt as though it came directly off an iceberg. It had been a warm day with fleecy clouds moving rather rapidly, Ellarson had noted, first in one direction, then in another. Now it was a veritable Texas norther, and the mayor buttoned his coat about his negligee shirt, while Mrs. Thornton shivered.

Presently the wind shifted and came directly from the north; there were no more tiny cyclones, for the cold blast had swept the new asphalt clean of everything. Several shopkeepers had rushed out and removed barrels, boxes and push-carts; there was a frightful uproar of tumbling lumber and pieces of roofs; people scampered for shelter and horses and autos dashed by in four directions.

Mr. Ellarson had just taken Mrs. Thornton

by the arm and reached for the doorknob on Slawson's grocery store when the water works siren began to scream.

In another moment the only fire company, consisting of a motor-driven engine, truck and hose cart, sped by.

"I hope it's not a bad one, Abbie, but isn't this a terrible time for a fire? Will you stay here a moment while I go into the middle of the street and see?"

It was unnecessary, for before Mrs. Thornton could reply, the wind brought down Main street a cloud of black smoke that nearly choked them. And it was hot and filled with sparks.

In another moment both saw the roof of the Valley Hotel, a five-story wooden structure, in a mass of flames. They were but a block from it. Crowds began to surge about. Screams rent the air, and they came from the top floor—the quarters occupied by the waitresses from Lockwood.

"Some of those poor girls are trapped, Isaac; for God's sake what shall we do?"

"The Hook and Ladder boys are already on the job. See—there's a fireman with a woman in his arms coming down. . . . The fire has crossed the street. . . . Yes, it has leaped two blocks and is racing west along Aspen. . . . The burning shingles are dropping everywhere."

In the face of this calamity Mayor Ellarson was of course the man of all men in Sawtooth City. Cool and quiet in ordinary affairs, in trouble, danger or disaster, he was always so cool that his friends, except Mrs. Thornton, sometimes believed he was indifferent or stunned. Not so here. He was as brave as he was that day in the mountain trail when Atkins sent a bullet through his face.

Hailing the temporary volunteer chief of the fire department, Jim Farley, as he swung past in his rubber boots and sou'wester, he said:

"Jim, keep cool. The west side is gone; you can't help it. Our apparatus is absolutely inadequate. Send a man to the telegraph office, another to a 'phone booth. Call up Lockwood, and wire too; get Crandall, if possible, and ask for help. They've got a couple of good engines and may be able to get here and save something. We can keep the flames from working back—too late for the west side. Tell Crandall to hurry. Manager Parsons will rush things with a special train, and they ought to be here in an hour."

Reports then began to come in of fires kindled blocks away from the starting place; the car shop was burning, also the round house and a lot of freight cars; the sugar beet mill was afire.

"But, Isaac, who is this wonderful man who has been up and down that ladder three times,

each time bringing with him a helpless woman? He isn't a fireman!"

And just then the big volunteer appeared at another window to which the ladder had been moved—a window in the fifth floor or mansard roof of the hotel—this time surrounded by alternate bursts of black smoke and flame.

"Jump!" shouted someone in the crowd—"the roof's falling!"

But the man didn't jump. He placed a hand on each side of the ladder, threw his feet around it, and slid to the sidewalk, his clothing ablaze.

A dozen hands grabbed him and beat out the flames; but in coming down the ladder his head had struck a protruding sign, laying open his scalp. He was insensible. Bystanders lifted him into an automobile and soon had him, under the direction of Mrs. Thornton, assisted by Elizabeth Connell, the modiste, in a safe place beyond the sweep of the flames.

There was a terrible clatter and din. Men yelled and women screamed, running hither and thither, faces blanched, some frightened to stupidity. Others who saw their new stocks of goods or their newly built homes swept away were merely dumb—they couldn't speak.

Finally a shout arose above the din:

"The wind's changing—see!"

But it was only for a fraction of a minute that

the gale scattered big burning embers into the district east of the hotel and the business houses surrounding it. Here was where the untrained new fire department, composed almost wholly of volunteers, did effective work.

The water works force-pumps were weak, but kept the one hydrant where the engine was located supplied; but it was useless to try to fight the course of the conflagration. It would be like trying to sweep the sea from a beach with a broom; therefore the fire-laddies kept the buildings that were behind the blaze dampened, and when the wind shifted temporarily, firemen and citizens mounted roofs everywhere, stamping out a dozen incipient blazes.

It was with great relief that Mayor Ellarson—just at the moment someone came up to him to announce that his new home had been swept away—noted that the wind was receding; that about half of the town, part business and part residential, including the handsome Mid-Continent station, would be saved.

"It didn't disturb him at all when told his new home had been swept away, and every one of the other homes on what is known as 'Yankee Hill' had met a like fate—all except the old Ellarson claim shanty!

If Mrs. Thornton had been with him when he received this information she would have de-

tected a smile. And if he had spoken his thoughts he would have said:

"I'm sure we'll be happier without it."

The extent of the conflagration, what in the way of property had been destroyed, did not have as much interest for the mayor as other things just now. Who was this giant who had rescued three young women from the blazing top story of the Valley Hotel? Are these women safe? Have any lives been lost? Where did Mrs. Thornton go? These were the questions bobbing up in his mind.

George Coon soon appeared with the car and brought an account of what had happened at the City Hall. The flames had gone the other way, but all the offices were deserted; so he had, with one policeman, stood guard over the safe in the treasurer's office, and with revolvers drawn, kept off a looting party that came, evidently from down the valley.

By 8:30 the wind had died down to a light breeze, the cold air had softened to its customary summer degree, and the people were taking stock of their losses. A few ruins were still burning, and once in a while there would be a little flare of light here and there.

At this time a special from Lockwood City arrived with about one-half of its fire apparatus, members of its fire department and city officials.

They didn't unload. It was all over, and within an hour they had started on the return trip.

Mayor Crandall was met by Mayor Ellarson and properly thanked for his prompt response in Sawtooth City's hour of need.

"If you want to, Crandall," he said, "you might stay yourself overnight. We have just begun to count noses, and I'm afraid some of the girls who came up from Lockwood and went to work in the Valley Hotel, and most of whom were in the big room under the roof when the fire broke out, are in the ruins. And there may be bodies in other ruins, for the fire swept like a hurricane, and was all over in an hour. One had to move quickly to escape. Very little in the track of the conflagration was saved. We have many homeless to look after and I am now about to form a Relief Committee. Why can't you act with us?"

"I'd be glad to do it—sure! Tell me what to do."

At this moment Mrs. Thornton and Elizabeth Connell stepped up with a big man, a giant in form, whose head, face and hands were almost entirely covered with bandages. He was hatless and coatless.

"Do you know who this is?" said Mrs. Thornton, addressing both mayors.

Both shook their heads.

"Well, this is the man—the hero—who rescued three girls at the Valley Hotel. He is terribly burned but will not do a thing we want him to do. He says he is going to rake over the ruins of the hotel as soon as they are cooled off because he knows, he says, that he will find one body—that of Margaret Nelson. She hasn't been seen since the fire. And he is sure he saw her engulfed by flame on his last trip up the ladder. . . . And neither one of you mayors recognize this man?"

Both mayors admitted they would be obliged to guess if they tried to name him.

Finally the man approached Mayor Ellarson, put his bandaged right hand on his shoulder and said:

"I'm Jake—Jake Harms."

This was more important to Mayor Ellarson just now than the wailings or lamentations of men and women, some of whom approached him and expressed their sympathy because his fine home had been destroyed. He wanted to tell every one of them that he was glad of it and emphasize it with a cuss-word. Mrs. Thornton had heard it in his presence though not for the first time, and had, when none was looking, reached for his hand, drawn it toward her, and given it a good squeeze at the same time whispering:

"It never was intended we should live in it—

we'll have another, Isaac, and *it will be different.*"

The two mayors finally prevailed upon big Jake Harms to go with them to the new City Hall for a rest while a hose company continued to cool off the ashes in the cellar of the Valley Hotel, for nothing else was left.

"Later on we'll let you boss that job," promised Crandall.

At the City Hall Jake was put on a leather settle in the mayor's ante-room in charge of George Coon who had strict orders to keep him quiet and prevent any attempt he might make to go out while the two mayors were in conference with a committee of ten citizens.

Finally George rapped on the door, saying:

"Jake says he's going—won't wait any longer."

"Guess I know what's the matter, Brother Ellarson," said Crandall, "funny I didn't think of it before—Jake needs a drink and I guess you'll have to forget certain things on this extraordinary occasion. I know Jake pretty well, and this excitement and strain he's under will never be quelled with anything but a good swig at a bottle. Let me talk to him."

And going into the ante-room, Crandall said?

"Jake, you're a big man in this town, and I'm proud of you, old scout—didn't even know you had left us, you were so quiet about it. When did you come up?"

"This morning on No. 7."

"Now, Jake, I want you to get the
about these Sawtooth folk. They do
you want a drink or a few drinks, and
need it. So I'm going to send George
to Mrs. Thornton's for a medicinal do
These people are all right, I tell
and——

"What's that you're saying, Cran
you mean that I've got to have booz
up on? Not on your life, Mayor; I
any in me when I took that ladder of
when those greenhorns were trying to
and I extended it to the roof. If I had
in me I'd never done it, old boy—neve

"No, Mr. Crandall; you pass my
the rest of 'em in there, and say for m
drink of whisky would spoil any cha
have in Sawtooth City."

"If I needed any test at all to convin
Jake Harms is a fit subject for endo
chief of the new fire department, this
Mayor Ellarson. "And Jim Farley
be offended, for he has no ambitions
rection and never was intended for a
kind."

So it came about that big Jake Har
keeper of a shady hotel, closely re

dive, began his metamorphosis. He had even come to Sawtooth unarmed, having at his last meeting with his bartender-successor presented that individual with a brace of pistols, ammunition and belt with the remark:

"For the first time in ten years I'm sober, and for the first time in twenty I visit a neighboring town unarmed."

"We had to have this scorching," said Mayor Ellarson. "We grew too fast. We will now tabulate our losses; those who have insurance will be able to take care of themselves—the others we will provide for both temporarily and permanently, with a fund which we will raise tonight, and which I take pleasure in heading with a contribution of $50,000 from myself and Mrs. Thornton—the amount of the insurance on the new home we had just finished; another $50,000 from the funds of the land company of which I am president, subject to the approval of the Board of Directors, another of $25,000 which General Manager Parsons has authorized me by wire to subscribe for the Mid-Continent, and personal contributions of $5,000 each from myself and Abigail Thornton."

Before midnight a quarter of a million dollars had been subscribed, and by noon the next day the total had reached $400,000. At six o'clock

the second night, before the last spark of the great fire had died out, work had begun on the big job of rebuilding.

Phœnix-like Sawtooth City arose from its ashes, and with it a stouter heart, and a greater determination than ever it had to be different.

For a week everyone seemed to dig, dig, dig. Early the next morning after the fire, the charred remains of a woman were found by Jake Harms in the cellar of the hotel. They were beyond identification, but the coroner decided, when the Nelson girl failed to appear, that she had been, so far as known, the only victim.

Father O'Connor and the Rev. Gordon Roberts worked side by side, grimy and perspiring, insisting that they must be employed in the actual labor because they had formed a partnership when the young flood had threatened to fill the Methodist church cellar.

Editor Dolan's newspaper plant, two blocks from the hotel, was one of the first buildings in the line of the advance of the hurricane of fire. It took thirty minutes to reduce him to actual poverty. On the other hand, his contemporary, newly arrived and getting his machinery in place, had escaped even the smoke, for he was not located in the track of the fire.

Both were put on the big relief committee to-

gether with the clergymen and others, the mayor being the directing voice in its continuous sessions beginning the second evening.

"Dolan," said the mayor in open meeting, "don't be discouraged; don't look glum. Your paper and Clarkson's will both be published from Clarkson's press just as soon as mechanics now at work have got the press going. No man in Sawtooth is to benefit through the misfortune of another if we can help it, and I guess we can; don't you think so, Clarkson?"

Clarkson, who had never had the honor of an acquaintance with a man of Isaac Thomas Ellarson's type, was amazed at what he heard. He hadn't expected anything of the kind, and being unprepared ought to be excused for not immediately responding with an agreeable statement; but Clarkson, fumbling a piece of paper before him on a table, and not looking up, said:

"Of course—yes—I'll do all I can temporarily; but——"

"Never mind the buts, Clarkson; we do things in a different way here in Sawtooth. You and Dolan will be a team and you're going to pull this uphill load like a couple of draft-horses. When Dolan's new outfit arrives—I've wired to Chicago for it—and it is in place, you will dissolve partnership. But you fellows are going to

issue two newspapers from Clarkson's plant, one working nights, the other days. Get your forces to work as soon as the wheels turn."

This incident gave Dolan something like a lead over Clarkson in the community; and when Mayor Ellarson saw it, and that Clarkson's lack of appreciation of the emergency was prejudicing people against him, he put an end to it by saying, publicly:

"We all have to learn. Some of us have a lot to learn; still others everything. Few angels came to Sawtooth City to locate—none, I believe, even approaching that spiritual state except perhaps Abigail Thornton, a few other women, Father O'Connor and Rev. Gordon Roberts."

It was a good start for Clarkson, and the plan worked. The evening of the second day Dolan's *Sun,* somewhat abbreviated in size, but none the less interesting, made its appearance from Clarkson's press with nearly all the space devoted to a well-written story of the fire. Clarkson had bent to the task with Dolan and three reporters, all of whom, as soon as the *Sun* was on the street, began work on the *Herald.*

In examining the files of these editions it is interesting to note that while the great conflagration crowded everything else to the rear someone had been inspired to write an editorial that breathed the spirit of Sawtooth City in every

line, and that the example of Mayor Ellarson and Mrs. Thornton, who laughed at their loss and refused to talk about it, and then gave to the public fund what little they had salvaged, in the way of insurance, had given inspiration and courage to everyone.

"Forget yesterday," the editor wrote, "as soon as possible. Think of today and tomorrow. Everything is ahead of us, and the only thing for us to do is to pull together courageously, responding to the suggestions and orders of our versatile and greatly beloved and respected mayor with action, action, action!"

The further announcement was made that a syndicate had been formed and would immediately erect a model newspaper office building on a conspicuous downtown corner, and that as soon as completed one set of presses would serve the purposes of both newspapers, each, however, occupying separate counting rooms, editorial rooms and composing rooms. An agreement had been reached, the article stated, that would greatly lower the expense of publication to both publishers, though their papers would be separate institutions.

A few days later, an examination of the files discloses, an item appeared which noted, guardedly, the strange absence of Judge Dixon. He had left some time before the big fire for his old

home in Ohio, upon receipt of the news of his father's death; no word had been received from him so far as anyone knew. The mayor, when questioned by a reporter, had said: "The judge will be back in due time; but his vacation has been extended, and Justice Carl Best will occupy the bench in his absence." There seemed to be some mystery about it, and the item caused quite a furore, compelling Mayor Ellarson, in the issue of the *Herald* next morning to make this statement:

"Judge Dixon, previous to coming to Sawtooth City, spent three years studying law in Ohio, being a clerk in the office of a well-known Congressman, but for certain personal reasons of his own Judge Dixon never went through the formality of a bar examination. Now that he is handy to a course of law lectures being given at an eastern university, he has decided to become a student again for ninety days at the end of which time he will be back on the Sawtooth municipal bench, qualified beyond the shadow of doubt to legally preside. This question had been raised, and while not seriously, there is no question as to the legality of any decision he has made, but he thought best, as did his friends, to be quite sure. It is not probable, however, that Judge Dixon will care to stay on the bench beyond the present year. A matter in this connection that



will be of general interest, I take pleasure in announcing: Judge Dixon, on returning to Sawtooth City, will bring his widowed mother with him."

The files of the *Sun* covering the period just previous to and following the completion of the Mid-Continent line to the valley, the celebration following the arrival of the first train; the progress of the line westward to Warm Springs and to the coast; the special edition containing write-ups of "Our Leading Citizens"—all these help to complete the remarkable story of a Western city that is different.

CHAPTER III

WHY IT IS DIFFERENT IN SAWTOOTH CITY

Theodore Burton, Mayor Ellarson's university classmate, had been spending some time in Utah examining mining properties and reporting on them for a large Eastern corporation, and on the way back East dropped in on his old friend. What he saw was a revelation. He had spent a great deal of time, the past few years, in new Western towns, but admitted none he had visited was being conducted with as much regard for law and order, and that never had he met a more contented and happy lot of people, notwithstanding their misfortune.

"Ellarson, you are doing things different, I should say, and decidedly better than I have ever seen them done," he said to the mayor after his visit had lasted a couple of days. "I'm fascinated with your town and your management of it, Ellarson, and am tempted to locate here. Have you anything I could do, or is there a line of business I could take up successfully?"

"Burton," replied the mayor, "we need you,

and there is, I believe, a great opportunity for you here, if you are willing to take your chances with us. Recently we have prepared for a Committee of Safety, and provided for a president of the Committee whose powers are to be, in certain matters, even greater than the mayor's, for the Committe is to supervise and indorse or reject some of our actions. For example, the mayor appoints the members of the police force and fire department upon the recommendation of the chiefs; but it is planned that the Committee of Safety shall be all-powerful, and if there is a recreant member of either the police or fire department, or he is suspected of dereliction, the Committee shall put him on trial and if found guilty dismiss him. The Committee will also, in a certain measure, supervise the work of all city departments, seeing that its taxing official obeys the mandate of the Constitution that 'taxation shall be uniform'; keep in close touch with the city's finances, supervise the issuance and sale of bonds; see that the ward funds and other funds are neither wasted nor diverted; supervise the paving of streets, the building of sewers, schoolhouses and other public buildings, etc.

"How would you like the presidency of this committee? The position pays no fancy salary—we have none in this town—and if you can live on $5,000 a year, I'd advise you to take the job.

Non-citizenship cuts no figure in this matter, for we have few men besides myself in public offices who have been in the valley a year."

After an hour's discussion along these lines, the mayor sent for Editor Dolan, and after complimenting him upon the appearance of his and Clarkson's newspapers, said:

"Dolan, you may announce in your paper that Theodore Burton, a mineralogist of note in the West, a graduate of Harvard, and a classmate of the mayor, has accepted the position of president of the new Committee of Safety and will assume the duties of his office immediately."

Burton's introduction to Sawtooth in the next issue of the *Sun* was a good one. It represented him to be "another live-wire drafted for Sawtooth City by its live-wire mayor."

Within an hour after the public had read this notice Chiefs Baxter and Harms, both in natty uniforms, were in President Burton's office with all their records, while the health commissioner, the comptroller and the tax commissioner had been notified to be ready to report in Room 6, next the mayor's office the following day, prepared to report on the conditions existing in their respective offices. There was considerable stir, and Mayor Ellarson was appealed to by all the officials for advice.

"Open up freely," was all he would say. "Keep nothing back, good or bad; this man will help you if you need help. He is going to keep his finger on the business end of this municipality, and see to it that there is no waste, no extravagance, no crookedness."

Baxter was the first to "go on the mat" as he expressed it. Ellarson had been easy with every one of his subordinates, believing ill of none, and basing his confidence in them upon his superior knowledge of men, a talent he knew he possessed, and of which he was very proud.

"Mr. Baxter," said President Burton after a preliminary greeting, and congratulations from Baxter, "I want a complete list of names of men in your department, together with their records, including not only what they have done as employés of the city, but previous to that. I want to know something of their antecedents, their past performances, as it were; what they have done, good or bad, since—well, as far back as we can go. A policeman ought to be a clean man, with a clean record. Have you compiled any information along these lines?"

"Well, no, Mr. President, I haven't; but I know pretty much everything about my men, what they have done recently and in the past. I have a list of their names, forty-six patrolmen, three

sergeants, two lieutenants, and four station keepers. I think I might be able to tell you anything worth knowing about any one of 'em."

"No, Baxter, that won't do at all; I want a written record on every man in your force to file in this office. When complaint is made against a policeman I want that man's past before me."

"Very well, sir, I'll see that you have it as soon as it can be compiled. Will tomorrow do?"

"Oh, yes, take a week, Chief, but make it complete; and if it is impossible to find out *all* we ought to know about a man, say so in your report on him, and give the reason why it is not obtainable."

Practically the same conversation took place between Chief Harms and "the new boss" as Harms called him, as he sadly looked at a picture of Mayor Isaac Thomas Ellarson that had been freshly hung upon the wall of President Burton's office. The talk made Jake Harms nervous and to some extent peevish. "For two cents," he mumbled to himself as he left the office and passed the mayor's door, "I'd drop in on Ike and ask him what's the meaning of all this; but he told me yesterday that I was practically cut off his apron strings, that I'm to report to Burton, and so forth. So if I said anything to him he'd think I am finding fault."

Jake Harms, as he strode off to his little office

in Engine House No. 1, wondered what he would write in the report about himself, for Burton had said when asked the question:

"Oh yes, Chief, include everyone from top to bottom; I want it all."

Jake sat at his little desk a few minutes thinking the matter over, and then decided to see Baxter and ask him what he intended to do. "Pete," he said to himself, "has got a wild bunch on his force—none with a record much worse than mine, but some that won't look good to Burton, I'm afraid."

So Harms and Baxter talked it over. "Jake," said Pete, "I've been a saloonkeeper and a gambler, as you know, and when things were going pretty fast hereabouts, when the cattle and sheep men were fighting, and when you owned that Maverick brand—well, I was pretty handy with my gun, and you knew how to take care of a Maverick, at least, if you didn't look after some that were already branded. This man Burton wants our records. Gee, old boy, I've got to tell him about shootin' you!"

They both laughed.

"And then," continued Pete, "I'm bound to tell him that when one of my bulls died out o' my team o' seven yoke while trailing across the Harney flats, I replaced him with a wild three-year-old from the herd of the Iliff outfit; I'm bound to do

it because the Iliff boss herder took me to Laramie for it and introduced me to the sheriff, who in turn, introduced me to the district attorney, and before I got through the Circuit judge gave me a year to think it over, and a few minutes later changed his mind and told the sheriff to keep me in jail thirty days longer and turn me loose. You see, Jake, I've got a jail record.

"But one o' my fellers, when he came to Warm Springs twenty years ago came out o' the pen where he spent two years for horse stealing; but, Jake, this man has been a good citizen ever since, has a family, owns his own home, is sober, never plays cards, even for fun, and is the best cop on the force. There are others, who if they had paid the penalty for their crimes, wouldn't be with us, for they'd have been sent to the pen years ago and if they lived one hundred years, wouldn't be free. But they weren't caught. And just the same, some more of our citizens, who came into this country when it was young, and none of us was any too particular about our conduct, would be doing time if they had been found out.

"Burton wants all this stuff, and so far as I'm concerned, he's going to get it, too.

"One o' my men—and he's a good one—when a young feller at old Crow Center, stole a saddle from one man and was putting it aboard a cayuse

that belonged to another when he was caught and sent to Laramie. Since then he has learned to read and write and figger, and does it so well that he's my secretary, by Gad! and I've got to get him to put that on his type-writin' machine, if I obey orders.

"Guess there's no way out o' it, Jake. Go ahead, anyway, and if you've got any ex-thieves on your department give Burton the details. I'm going to have my report ready tomorrow. Maybe he is goin' to make a clean-up; but when he starts it'll get to Ike and then we'll see."

"All right, Pete, I'll give it to Burton straight."

The next afternoon both Baxter and Harms sat in an outer office waiting to be called by Burton when the mayor came in, on his way to call on Burton.

"Boys," he said, stopping, "you look troubled; what's Burton doing to you?"

They told him all about it. Isaac Ellarson bit his lip, thought a moment and then said:

"When he calls for you and your reports I'll be present. Why didn't you tell me about this?"

Baxter answered for both, saying:

"Well, Mr. Mayor, you told us he was boss and to report to him, and we couldn't very well report *him* to you; and if you hadn't asked we'd never said a word about what was goin' on—understand?"

"Yes, I do; but I'm glad I inquired."

Ten minutes later, with the mayor still in the president's office, both chiefs were summoned together. Before they came in, however, Burton had told the mayor that he had formulated a plan to get acquainted with every man on the city payroll, and asked him to remain and tell him what he thought of it.

Baxter was the first to go on the mat. Unfolding a package he handed it to President Burton.

"You will find that quite complete, Mr. Burton; it goes from top to bottom, and as near as I can judge improves as you reach the bottom. The last ten names are of men who, so far as I can say, have never broken one of the Ten Commandments; anyway, every one of 'em says he hasn't. As for the others, including myself, I don't know but one or two of the Commandments they haven't busted higher'n a kite."

The mayor arose, saying:

"What is all this about, Theodore? Are you compiling the records of our policemen and firemen?"

"Yes, Mr. Mayor, I think it will be well for us to know whether our policemen and firemen, especially, have always led exemplary lives. Of course, I realize that some of them are not angels —none of us are—but if a man has been a thief,

if he has served time, the police force or the fire department is no place for him."

"Theodore, you astonish me—and I am surprised, too, and disgusted with myself for not going deeper into our policy here; but I took it for granted that you, being keen-witted, and somewhat familiar with our affairs, would understand that we couldn't possibly proceed along any such lines as these. Do you mean to say that you purpose to taboo a good policeman or fireman because he committed a crime, paid the penalty, came back to society and threw himself upon its mercy—do you mean to say that he cannot be trusted? Tell me, Burton, old chum, do you believe that a man, unless a lifelong criminal, who has made a mistake and corrected it, has no place on the Sawtooth City payroll?"

"Well, Mr. Mayor," said Burton, apparently troubled for a reply, at the same time arising and walking around the room and coughing, "you see it's this way: I've always believed in the theory, once a thief always a thief."

"Then you mean to say," said the mayor with spirit and somewhat heatedly—"then you mean to say to me that if Peter Baxter when a young man freighting across the then wild country here, lost a work ox and picked up a cattle man's unbroken steer to replace him, and went to jail for it that he's never going to be recognized as

an honest man with a clean bill of health, fit to be trusted? Or that Jake Harms, who has more than once admitted to me that he has broken nearly every law of the state, but who saw the error of his way, and started all over to build himself up, is going to be sent back where he left off to ply the trade of a divekeeper, a bootlegger and a gambler?

"Theodore, my mind takes me back to Boston, to Cambridge—think a few thinks, old friend. Can you look me straight in the eye and say that you never, not once in your life, broke a law, the penalty of which if discovered, meant a term in prison? Don't answer, old man, don't answer—not now, anyway, because I am going to say to you, in the presence of these two good citizens—good friends of mine, good friends of Sawtooth City, good friends of yours, if you please, sir, that I cannot look *you* in the eye and say that if upon one occasion at least the law had been invoked, I'd not have gone to prison."

Burton was silent for a full half minute. So was every one else in the room. Then Mayor Ellarson continued:

"When we broke the lock on that B. & M. oil house in the railroad yards and took the red and green switch lights, and set them up in the grave-yard, we were plain burglars. We broke and entered in the night-time, didn't we? We

stole the property of the B. & M. We were plain burglars—thieves.

"When we stole the ivory pool-balls in the old Dutchman's billiard parlors we were petty larceny thieves, weren't we? But there was something worse back of this deed: It was the impulse behind it; we did it because the Dutchman refused us credit, and he refused us credit because we were a couple of young dead-beats, neither one of us ever paying for anything we could get trusted for. We were, as I understand it now, a couple of young villains.

"But somehow we weren't found out. We lived in a highly civilized community, were the sons of reputable men—had good mothers and every advantage a boy could wish for; yet we had criminal instincts as sure as you live. We stole for pure cussedness, not only these times but on other occasions. Sometimes for spite, other times to satisfy our appetites.

"I'll never forget how you always avoided Dorchester street after the clothes line incident, and how, more than once, I saw you button your coat for fear the owner of the pink shirt—that conspicuous garment—was going to recognize it and turn you over to the police as a common clothes-line robber.

"But, Theodore, I'm ready to stop any time you say so, though I'd like to go back to——"

"Never mind, never mind, Isaac, you've gone back far enough—far enough to show me that you are a broad-minded, true-blue friend to every man who is trying to live honestly."

"Remember this, Theodore," continued the mayor, "few of the men about you here in this valley have had our early advantages; therefore whatever conflict they may have had with the law was vastly more excusable than it would have been with us were the circumstances reversed. We were early taught to respect the property and the rights of others; but we were young and full of fire, and took advantage of our positions to do things that, had we been discovered, would have made us unfit today—according to your opinion—to be even policemen or firemen in Sawtooth City, to say nothing of the somewhat exalted positions of trust and honor we now hold. What do you say, Theodore?"

"This," said Burton, arising and going across the room to Baxter and Harms and reaching for a hand of each:

"Gentlemen, it is never too late to learn. There are many things I do not know, but early in my life I did learn one thing well, and that was to acknowledge an error when I made it and it was pointed out to me.

"I am, as I understand it, your superior, *but only in command,* gentlemen."

"Well," drawled Baxter as he picked up the report he had submitted to President Burton, "then I suppose you are not interested in this report."

"Not a particle," came the quick reply.

"But," spoke up Harms, "Mr. President, Peter Baxter and I have been entertained for quite some time with your youthful criminal record. It's pretty black; but I don't think it fair for this thing to be so confounded one-sided, and I'm going to leave my report here and will ask Pete to do the same. We have given you complete histories of our known criminal lives; read 'em and file 'em if you like where we have already filed yours and the mayor's—away out somewhere beyond our memories, for I promise you that when Pete Baxter and Jake Harms leave this office that will be the everlasting end of this—am I right, Pete?"

"You're right, Jake! Everyone in Sawtooth has a——poor memory for anything that ever happened before August 26th last."

And Theodore Burton said to Isaac Thomas Ellarson after the two chiefs had departed:

"Ike, old man, sure as you live it's different here in Sawtooth."

"Just another funeral," said the mayor, "burying the past. We've had lots of them—there's going to be more."

In the November following the big fire, when more than two-thirds of the burned district had been rebuilt, much of it more substantially than before, Mayor Ellarson called a meeting of city officials, church organizations, the Fire Relief Association and Women's Auxiliary Civic bodies, announcing that it was for the purpose of taking stock—that is, reaching a balance in summing up just how much success and how much failure there had been in the plans originally formulated to make Sawtooth different.

Everything had not been "honey-pie." There had been failure, and Sawtooth City was not yet just what its projectors had proposed. It had, in truth, fallen far short of the great ideal conceived by Isaac Thomas Ellarson and his principal co-laborer, Mrs. Abigail Thornton; but one thing was manifest—only one policeman had proved himself unworthy of the trust placed in him, and he was one who had a record, having at one time been convicted of bootlegging. His love of liquor led him, as an officer of the law, to revert to his earlier weakness and not only drink to excess but conspire with a lawbreaker who smuggled intoxicants into the valley. He was discharged from the force, heavily fined, and took the advice of Chief Baxter, which was to leave town.

It was shown by reports from the women's

organization, that of the twelve Lockwood girls who accepted employment, only two had returned to their evil ways. They also left Sawtooth City.

The crime record was shown, in Baxter's report, to have been ten cases of assault; carrying concealed weapons, fifty; larceny, twenty; incendiarism, one; prostitution, four; liquor violations, twelve. There were convictions in sixty-eight percent of these cases.

CHAPTER IV

A BLACK EYE FOR SAWTOOTH AND A LESSON

Elizabeth Connell's attempt to rehabilitate herself was not, as she had believed from the start, an easy matter, and the story of her losing fight—at least a portion of it—is one of the black marks on Sawtooth's escutcheon. She was too wise a woman to expect or desire immediate success in her undertaking.

She knew women, and that while they would like her work, they would, if they patronized her, make it apparent, in a disagreeable way, that while they were willing to associate with her long enough to be fitted for a gown, few of them would recognize her on the street.

Thus she was not disappointed or even grieved when deliberately and openly snubbed in public; but she resented the insults which were heaped upon her by women who thought they were doing it secretly.

For example, no man tipped his hat to her on the street without suffering the penalty; both the man and Elizabeth Connell immediately became

the subject of gossip and sometimes it caused the female tongue to wag at civic meetings and religious gatherings almost to the exclusion of all other business.

But she always had one or more defenders, and strange as it may seem, these usually did more harm to her cause than her enemies, for they always reported these discussions to their husbands, and even passed them on direct to Elizabeth Connell.

One man, especially, who had formed a particularly good opinion of the woman, a professed bachelor of fifty, and who was ready to give Miss Connell his name and share his fortune with her, and who had faith in the genuineness of her determination to reform, was so angered by this continual gossip that he spent most of his time publicly denouncing the woman's detractors, losing no opportunity in public places, to express his opinion about the wives of some of Sawtooth City's leading men.

Naturally his anger got him into trouble more than once, for Sawtooth men were human, and while in many ways different from the general run of men in cities farther East, they would tolerate nothing that seemed to be interference in their family affairs.

Finally, one evening, late in the summer, while the lobby of the new Valley Hotel was crowded,

something took place that for a time gave the impression, especially to the strangers present, that after all Sawtooth City was not all it professed to be. For there was a gun play in which Edward Foster, clothing merchant, and Thomas Nast, druggist, were the principals.

Foster it was who had been loudly protesting against the "cheap gossipers" as he called them. And just now he was naming names, including that of Mrs. Nast, and insinuating, in his excited speech, that some of the women who talked about Miss Connell and himself had none too clean records themselves and suggested that some of them ought to be investigated.

Foster had been a trader in the hills long before Sawtooth City took its place on the map, and if some of the things said about him by the women were true, he had a record not only as a gambler, but one of the brawling kind who had failed to live in peace with a wife though he had made the attempt at least twice, and now called himself a bachelor!

Foster had said that Mrs. Nast, who led a recent discussion of himself and Miss Connell at a meeting of the Relief Committee, was "a plain liar, and that her skirts were none too clean."

Nast, also one of the pioneers, but not of the

valley, at this point whipped out a gun, advanced upon Foster and shouted:

"Eat what you just said, Foster, or I'll——"

But Foster had a gun in a sack-coat pocket with his right hand resting upon it ready for business.

They both fired at once, before bystanders could interfere. Foster's pistol arm was perforated and Nast's shot went wild, clipping a clean hole through a pane of glass in front of the hotel bookkeeper.

A deputy sheriff disarmed both men and with the assistance of the crowd succeeded in quieting them.

Mayor Ellarson had been to the railroad station with his car to meet Judge Dixon and his mother and entered the hotel just as the deputy led Foster to the door on his way to the office of a doctor. There was considerable excitement and the mayor when told of what had happened, gave orders that neither man should be arrested, at least until he had made an investigation. And neither one of the men ever was arrested.

"This is a black eye for Sawtooth, I'm afraid," said the mayor as he accompanied the judge and his mother to a suite of rooms that had been reserved for them; "but, Judge, I'm already formulating a plan to utilize the disagreeable incident for the good of Sawtooth City—everybody

in it. You see what gossiping does; but some women—and not a few men, too—can't resist this temptation. But I am more sorry than I can explain for that poor woman, who I believe is honestly trying to live a good life. Why will most women, and some men, not understand?"

Mrs. Dixon, a little woman, dressed in deep mourning, sweet-faced and gentle in every look and manner, busied herself in unpacking, assisted by her idol—the judge.

And she took leave of the mayor, when the trio reached the door, with expressions of regret, for she told him she had *so* much to say to him, and could hardly wait for a good long chat. The mayor assured her that he, also, was anxious for an opportunity to visit with her, and that he, too, had much to say to her that he was positive would be agreeable; that Mrs. Thornton and other ladies would call upon her next day, and he hoped she would like Sawtooth and the people.

The mayor was greatly troubled by what had happened in the lobby, but forgot none of the courtesies due the newcomer, and assured the judge that he (the mayor) was mighty glad to see him and hoped he would devote the next few weeks wholly to Mrs. Dixon.

From the hotel the mayor went direct to his office and 'phoned Mrs. Thornton, asking her if she could, with Mrs. Langworthy, come to the

City Hall if he would send his car for them. She readily consented without asking for particulars about the call, saying she would have George Coon drive over to the Langworthy home, on the way downtown, for Mrs. Langworthy.

In half an hour the two good women and the mayor, were in a conference that was opened by the mayor, who, after relating the incidents leading up to this meeting, said:

"It looks to me as though our plans have received a severe jolt. What is Miss Connell going to say, and how are we going to approach her? Or, should we approach her at all?"

Mrs. Langworthy was first to speak, saying:

"I don't think it would be advisable to try to approach her, for if we did we certainly would fail—she was taken to Mercy Hospital at noon today, and the doctors say she has pneumonia of a very virulent type."

The mayor was shocked, and so was Mrs. Thornton, for on the ride to the City Hall Mrs. Langworthy, holding strictly to her determination not to talk about Miss Connell, had even withheld mentioning the matter to Mrs. Thornton. She hadn't even inquired from Mrs. Thornton what the errand to the City Hall was for, and George Coon, knowing his place perfectly, seldom spoke to the ladies unless spoken to. He knew all about the gun-play at the Valley Hotel,

too, and what it was about, but said nothing, though he strongly suspected the visit of the ladies to the mayor's office was in connection with it.

"Poor woman," said Mrs. Thornton.

"Yes, poor woman," repeated the mayor, "there is nothing in the way of attention she shall lack." And he reached for his desk 'phone, soon had a connection with Mercy Hospital and was in communication with Sister Francisco, in charge.

"I know," said the mayor, "that it is absolutely unnecessary for me to say to you that there is nothing too good for Elizabeth Connell; but I want you to know, from me direct, that the city of Sawtooth is deeply interested in this woman's welfare. She is deserving of much better treatment than she has recently been having."

The good sister promised that nothing would be left undone, and said:

"At this very moment two physicians are at her bedside. She is in a private room, and will be attended every moment by nurses. The doctors say she is very ill, but cannot state at this time how seriously. Time will tell. She seems to have resigned herself to the worst, and is discouraged; but she is very calm and has called for Father O'Connor, who will be here shortly."

"This is a terrible thing," said the mayor as he hung up the receiver for a moment, and then removed it and said:



"Give me Main 706; please hurry." And after a moment, "Is that you, Dolan? All right, come to my office right away, please, and bring Clarkson. I have something important for both of you."

In ten minutes the two editors were in the conference.

"The affair at the Valley Hotel, of course," said the mayor, addressing both of them, "is a matter for publication in the *Herald* in the morning. I suppose you are working on it. Both of you know that I have never yet tried to dictate to you, though I have given you advice which you have usually taken.

"This affair is not wholly between Nast and Foster; it is more far-reaching. It concerns every loyal citizen of Sawtooth City, more especially the women. And while I have never sought a line of publicity from you, I have asked you to come here and receive from me a statement that I will ask you to publish in shape of an authorized interview. It is this:

"There are some things in this world that are as bad as whisky and gambling. We have quite thoroughly cut ourselves away from these twin evils, but in doing so we have failed to take note of a monster who has crept in among us, invaded some of our best homes, crawled into business houses, slunk about the streets, and finally come out in the open.

"I refer to Gossip.

"It is a curse to any community and has got to be scotched in this one, otherwise what we have gained in reputation for sobriety and good order, is going to be overwhelmed and blotted out.

"This gun-play at the Valley was the result of gossip. A serious tragedy was averted, but what happened is enough to encourage some of our neighboring rival communities to say, 'I told you so,' and to ask some awkward questions of us, and to sneer and make us the subject of jest and ridicule.

"This occurrence ought to be a lesson to those who, to gratify an unexplainable appetite, have wagged their tongues. In this case it almost ended in murder. It is no fault of the gossips that it didn't; and I'm not so sure that the monster, Gossip, has not set his firm grip upon at least one person so firmly that it cannot be broken—and death may follow.

"Two men have disgraced themselves by trying to kill one another; a woman, overtaken by disease and broken in spirit by persecution, is on a sick-bed. At least a dozen women of good repute in Sawtooth City are at least partly responsible. . . . Too much gab!

"You may fix this up to suit yourself, Clarkson, but don't fail to say that I called it Gab, an alias

for Gossip, and that I hope we can have a necessary funeral right away, and bury Gossip forever out of sight.

"If the lesson is learned it will be cheap for Sawtooth City, unless—unless—Elizabeth Connell dies. If she does it will take us a long time to recover the good name we have labored so hard to earn."

Both Mrs. Thornton and Mrs. Langworthy were of the opinion that this interview, and perhaps a couple of good editorials endorsing it, would be more effective than anything they might do or say, and it was so agreed.

Clarkson published the interview as here given in the *Herald* and it also appeared later in the *Sun* with some elaborations and accompanied by a red-hot outburst from the Rev. Mr. Roberts and an indignant protest from Father O'Connor.

For five days Elizabeth Connell hovered between life and death and at midnight of the fifth day she breathed her last, her lips being constantly moistened to the very end by a faithful nurse as Father O'Connor administered the last rites of the church.

"Elizabeth Connell never had a chance to recover," said Dr. Ladd, "for from the start she gave up the battle, saying life was not worth living, and she was ready and willing to go. Against this it was almost impossible for us to

save her, though we adopted every means at hand."

And this was published in the *Herald* together with a tribute from Mayor Ellarson and Mrs. Thornton who said it had developed during the past five days that Elizabeth Connell had secretly worked for a long time among the young women of Sawtooth City who formerly lived in Lockwood, some of whom were ill and needed physical comforts. She had paid their doctors' bills, sent fruit and flowers to them and helped them in other ways. And some of her money, it developed, had gone to St. Mary's, a good sum to Dr. Roberts, while the relief fund showed her name written in a hand denoting refinement and education, and the sum opposite being $1,000.

"And now it develops," wrote Dolan in the account of her death, "that while she deposited $5,490 in the First National Bank on August 26th, her balance is barely enough to pay for a decent funeral. The stubs of her check-book show that nearly all of this money went to charity. Her business was done at almost no profit, according to the books kept by one of the young women who came to Sawtooth with her, and her patronage was considered only fair, though growing rapidly, for she was gradually extending her reputation as a modiste to neighboring towns."

Sawtooth City, until the funeral notice was

published, hung its head. Then there was an awakening caused by a call, published in both newspapers and signed by the Mayor, Judge Dixon, Mrs. Thornton, Mrs. Langworthy, and all the members of the Fire Relief Committee, calling upon everyone in Sawtooth City to pay tribute.

St. Mary's church was crowded with men and women of all classes to hear the simple service, and at the grave the crowd was so great that it was impossible for many to approach within hearing distance.

Dolan, the *Sun* editor, treated the event without elaboration, in the regular obituary column, but when he submitted it for approval to Father O'Connor and Mayor Ellarson he said:

"I know this is the way to do this; but if I did as I actually would like to do I would give it a display heading of one word: Murdered."

It was a lesson to Sawtooth City; also a black eye, for it took several years to remove the discoloration.

CHAPTER V

AN UNWRITTEN LAW AGAINST GOSSIPING

Mayor Ellarson never had as much fear of disaster to his plans for making Sawtooth a model city as he did at the time of Elizabeth Connell's death and for a week afterward.

"We have had practically no difficulty in demonstrating that we can have a good town without gambling and liquor and their co-evils," said the mayor to Dr. Roberts, "but we have a new job cut out for us by women of the town—the good women, too—some of whom are victims of a vile habit that must be stamped out—gossip. It has certainly hurt us more than liquor has, for we have had little trouble from that; and surely more than gambling for gambling is a thing that has never defiled us. The incident that gave us our first gun-play, and nearly ended in the deaths of two men was the outcome of gossip; and the story has gone broadcast in the newspapers, some of them significantly calling attention to the fact that while we obey the liquor and gambling laws

religiously, we are not as broad-minded as we pretend, and allowed our people to persecute a woman who was trying to live a decent life, and drove that person to death. There is some truth in these statements. Moreover, these newspaper comments call attention to the fact that we have forgotten some of the great precepts of the Bible —'He that is without sin let him cast the first stone,' and 'Judge not that ye be not judged.'

"We have shown the wrong spirit, and I put the blame upon the whole community, and not upon individuals, because we as a community make the reputation upon which we must stand or fall.

"Originally it was understood by every one of us who were here at the beginning that we would exert every effort to build up a good town by a system not too narrow yet stringent in certain respects; that no man or woman, no matter how bad he or she had been, should be denied an opportunity, but that, given an opportunity, persons with evil records would be required to make good by honest toil. We have been obliged to send few away, and we have demonstrated that it is possible to make good citizens from material many communities have rejected.

"But a spirit has been shown on the part of some of our women and men, too, not only to remember the past but to recall it. This has got to stop. In the older days in New England the

law attended to the gossiper; but I doubt if we need any law here. Our lesson is freshly in our minds though I fear not yet learned; and it is of this I wish to talk to you: . . .

"Dr. Roberts, have you never heard that a harlot goes to heaven?"

"Well, no—no, I haven't."

"Then I will say to you that she does, though living in a community close to hell until she demonstrates that it is not her desire to follow the life of a prostitute in the spiritual world."

"You astonish me, Mr. Mayor, but how do you know?"

"I will take you to my slim little library and show you something after which, if you are convinced that I am right, I am going to ask you to deliver an address to the people of Sawtooth City in the new council chamber of the City Hall. Even if you are not convinced that I am right on this point I want you to talk to the people, anyway, especially the women, about gossiping."

The Rev. Gordon Roberts agreed to make the address and the day was set. In the meantime he visited Mr. Ellarson's old homestead, now occupying a whole city square fairly in the center of the city, but which had not been in the slightest manner improved, found the books and dived into them. He first picked up a volume called,



"Conjugial* Love," and devoted a day and a night to it. Later he told the mayor that he, like preachers of all denominations that he had ever known was familiar with a classic by the same author, "Heaven and Hell," because that volume is in nearly every preacher's library, but that he had had no knowledge of "Conjugial Love"; neither had he ever before seen any one of the twelve great volumes of the "Heavenly Arcana" *(Arcana Cœlestia)* which he found thrown into a corner of the old log house with a lot of mouldy harness, saddles and rusty hardware. These he had taken to his own study for perusal, he said, and was prepared to say that what he read had surprised and pleased him.

Hand-bills, posters, newspaper notices and other methods of publicity filled the council chamber to capacity and standing room when Dr. Roberts stepped upon the platform. The audience consisted of fifteen hundred of the best-known citizens of Sawtooth City and valley. Most of them, especially the women, anticipated a scolding from the rough and ready Welshman, nevertheless they were there prepared to submit.

"Recently," Dr. Roberts began, "a woman died

* Swedenborg uses this word, which is from the Latin "Conjugialis," in writing of true marriage love, avoiding the use of "conjugal," the term generally used to denote a simple legal union.

in Sawtooth City. She ought to be alive today. She cannot be called back, and I wouldn't call her back if it were any use to do so. She is happier where she is, even though every one of us—if she came back—should take her by the hand in affectionate brotherhood or sisterhood. It has been stated that this woman was murdered, but the statement is untrue, although if murder could be committed by word of mouth—by busy tongue—she *was* murdered. It will do us no good to dwell at length upon the cause of the woman's death except to say that it is altogether probable if she had not been persecuted—if she had been encouraged in her determination to live a good life after years of evil existence—she might be here.

"Life is especially sweet to one who earnestly desires to show that while there has been failure, there is genuine desire to succeed in a new effort. For this reason it is our duty to help such a person, certainly not to hinder.

"Did it ever occur to you, my friends, that you cannot be led away from evil unless you have been led into it? If it were otherwise evil would hide itself and pollute the interiors of the mind, and diffuse itself like a pestilence and finally burst forth the barriers, and ruin the externals which are of the body. To this end brothels are opened——"

"Where? Where?" exclaimed a man, ex-

citedly, as he arose in the back end of the hall, "do you mean in heaven?"

"Be patient, friend; hear me a little further."

The man sat down, but before he did so created nearly a panic by saying:

"Go ahead, but I'm here to keep you straight."

Dr. Roberts resumed:

"In the other world brothels *are* opened to harlots—at the very side of hell—where they (the harlots) have opportunity of varying their lusts. And when it is found that they cannot be led away from their earthly lusts these harlot spirits are swallowed up in hell.

"And I want to say that in after life we all appear just where we desire to go, according to the desire formed in this life.

"I am convinced that the woman who died in Sawtooth City a few weeks ago had no desire to continue an evil life after she entered the spiritual world, for she left it here; but if she did the opportunity was there for her, as it will be for us all when we go hence to the other world. Therefore, it behooves us here to choose a good mode of life so that we may have the desire when we go among the angels of heaven to occupy exalted places. If we live lives of crime here because we desire to be criminals we shall awaken in the spiritual world surrounded by spirits who will direct us to the place we wish to go."

"Where do you get that?" yelled the stranger.

"From Emanuel Swedenborg, who lived nearly two hundred years ago, and who was a scientist and philosopher and gifted in many other ways, a seer if you please, who, doubted at first, is now believed and accepted by many thousands of deep-thinking people.

"His greatest effort was to disclose the true nature of the Bible, showing it to be in a very real and true sense the actual inspired word of God, and explaining with all necessary detail that its essential holiness is due to the fact that it has, in every sentence, word, and syllable, a holy, internal sense, treating not of the creation of the material world or of the history of any chosen people, but solely of God, man, their relation to each other, man's regeneration, and the life after death."

"Do you mean, then, that there is evil in heaven?"

"No; neither does Swedenborg, but he maintains with great logic, that without evil we would not know good; so evil opportunity is presented. There is no evil in any of the heavens—there are several heavens in degree; but at least one heaven is not far removed from hell, according to Swedenborg; it is so near, in fact, that when a spirit has just arrived from the world of the flesh and is shown to the place he desires to go, and this place

is, for example, a saloon, a gambling house or a brothel, and upon arrival feels and expresses the lusts that pleased him in the world, he collapses into the abyss of the certain hell that is in his desire."

"Is there a hell for gossips?" shouted someone.

"Swedenborg does not say so, but if it is evil to gossip and speak ill of the neighbor, to lie about the neighbor, or to impede the neighbor's progress here, I think the Lord will provide a hell for the gossiper where the gossiper will be pleased to go—a gossipers' heaven or hell, as you choose to call it.

"In another work *(Arcana Cœlestia)*, sometimes called the Heavenly Arcana, it is related that there are girls in heaven who have been enticed into harlotry and thus persuaded that there is no evil in it, *though they are in other respects rightly disposed.* These, because they are not yet of an age to be able to know and judge about such life, have an instructor with them in heaven.

"The woman who died and because of whose death I came here to talk to you as neighbors and friends, gave up her evil life, and it is reasonable to believe, when the opportunity to renew it came to her in spiritland, she spurned it, even though her last experience here was not pleasant or encouraging.

"Let us all remember our duty to all our neighbors, and remember, 'Judge not that ye be not judged'; also that when we die, we, too, shall be tempted to live as we have lived here, full of defects at least; if not as thieves, gamblers, bootleggers and harlots, perhaps as heartless gossipers."

An unwritten law in Sawtooth City that is well observed relates to gossip, especially about women who have fallen, staggered to their feet, struggled a while and finally risen and looked, not without hope, for sisterhood. What Dr. Roberts said, and Mr. Ellarson's statement, together with the action of the women's organizations, had most to do with this reform.



CHAPTER VI

MISS BANG COMES TO TOWN

For a week following the death of Elizabeth Connell Sawtooth City's population, both male and female, indulged in a great deal of crimination and recrimination. In a very human way those who felt themselves more or less responsible for the situation used every bit of ingenuity they possessed in an effort to conceal their own guilt or to fix responsibility for the situation upon someone else. The question was one for discussion at every family fireside—among adults—and at social and business gatherings. Everyone admitted the justice of Mayor Ellarson's public statement, but none was willing to admit that he or she was guilty.

It was while the subject was under general debate that a person of the feminine gender arrived in town and registered with a masculine hand at the Valley Hotel—

"Julia Bang, Chicago."

She fairly threw her bag at a porter who moved toward her at a snail's pace, for she had

jumped from the 'bus, crossed the walk and entered the lobby before anyone in the hotel had awakened to the fact that No. 7 had arrived.

When the clerk whirled the register around to receive her signature he smilingly handed her a pen, first dipping it into the big inkwell.

"I want a good outside room," she said, "with a bath, and not on an upper floor, as I observe this is a walk-up establishment. Later on I may want a permanent room."

She looked pleasant and satisfied when accommodated, but did not return the clerk's smile or make reply to his query:

"Have you any trunks?"

Julia Bang was intent on getting to her room, and having attended to her baggage at the station, started off, following the porter to the big stairway. When they reached Room 27 and the porter had handed her the key she flipped a quarter at him in such a manner that he was unable to catch it, but gave him a scrambling race of twenty feet.

"George," she said, good-humoredly, "wake up; bring me a pitcher of ice-water, and when my two big trunks come over from the station get 'em up here, and don't keep me waiting, either!"

Down in the lobby he made the remark to two other combination bell-hop porters that the new

arrival acted like a regular travelling salesman. "No nonsense about her," he added.

The arrival of a lone woman in Sawtooth City at this period of its history was no unusual event; in fact the arrival of a dozen women in a single 'bus load was nothing remarkable; but the key clerk and the bookkeeper who saw her flourish her signature on the big book and then pitch the pen into its rack of curled brass wire, looked at one another and laughed out loud.

"What is she?" asked the bookkeeper.

"Search me," came the quick response, "but if she's going to live in this town she's going to be in a class by herself or I don't know women. She looks like a married woman, but I don't believe it; married women don't have many of her ways—those we've noted anyway. Bet she's an old maid. She knows too much about taking care of herself to be married—nothing dependent about her. She's forty past, Jim, as healthy as a peach, and has a mighty pleasant way about her, too, even if independence is written all over her. If that porter hadn't made a quick move I think her handbag would have bowled him over, for she threw it at him; and because she was so reckless with it, take it from me it isn't filled with hand-mirrors, manicure sets, bottles of toilet water and other breakables."

"Yes, I believe she's an unmarried woman; but say, Gus, she's no old maid, if she isn't workin' double. Listen to me, old man, you don't know as much as you should about women, because, I suppose, you're a confirmed old bach. Being married myself, and having been a hotel employé in Denver, Salt Lake and Seattle, I've seen ten women perform in hotels where possibly you've seen one. You want to know what she is? Listen, Gus, she's a bachelor girl, and I don't give a hang whether she is forty or fifty—the kind that never become old maids, you take it from me. Did you see her march off and go up that staircase? Well, she did two steps in each jump and I watched every move because I expected to see her bump into that porter and knock him down.

"And I'll bet she weighs one hundred and seventy or better; and she's a hill climber in them flat heels though she has a cumbersome tonneau. Some gal, I say, good eater, fine talker, a good fellow and able to take care of herself in a fire, a fight, a mob, among a lot of women or men either.

"The only correct thing in your size-up of this guest that is right is that she is too independent to be a married woman or to need or have any time for a husband. No, sir, Gus, no old maid there—a reg'lar bachelor gal. See if I'm not right."

The key clerk put a fresh handful of wooden tooth-picks in the tin receptacle, and hit the call bell a slam at the same time motioning the porter who had escorted Julia Bang to Room 27. He loitered up to the desk.

"Did that lady give you a tip?"

"Did she? say, boss, she's a baseball player: She curved it to me and it came pretty near putting my eye out."

"What's matter; was she sore?"

"Sore! No, no; but she told me to get a move on, or something, and get her trunks up. They're out in front now."

"Well, you'd better hump yourself."

Then Mr. Clerk picked the 'phone receiver off the hook and put it to his ear to answer its lively jingle.

"Certainly, Madam," he said softly, "they're outside now and two porters are after them—in about two minutes. Yes, Ma'am, I'll order one right away."

"Was that the Bang woman?" asked the book-keeper.

"It was, and you never heard a sweeter voice; it had honey in it, too, even if she did say 'Well, you ought at least to have a freight elevator in this hotel; I'm sorry for those two porters. Tell 'em to hurry up and that I've got a fifty cent piece on the dresser for them. Don't mind stair-

climbing myself, and if you had an elevator don't think I'd use it. Say, Mr. Clerk, is there a taxi service in this town? If there is order one for me, and have it at the door in twenty minutes.'"

Julia Bang had been in her room only thirty minutes, at the end of which time she came down the stairway appropriately attired in a handsomely tailor-made street costume, everything tastily matched, including a neat toque.

The two men behind the desk looked at her out of the corner of their eyes. Neither one was a masher or given to any degree of freshness with women guests; but she had attracted unusual attention. She started for the door, passing a dozen men, without looking at any of them, but with a manner of apparent trained indifference.

The key clerk turned to speak to the bookkeeper and did not notice that at the door she wheeled quickly and started for the desk, and stood within hearing distance when he said to the bookkeeper:

"She's a Miss, all right."

Julia Bang heard it and said smilingly:

"If you refer to me you've made a good guess —I'm a bachelor girl. . . . Now tell me, please, is there a Woman's Exchange, a Y. W. C. A. or any woman's organization handy? I want to meet some women of this town who are doing things."



"Yes," replied the clerk, trying to conceal the embarrassment caused by being caught talking about a guest, "there's a fine Y. W. C. A. and a Civic Committee of women. The committee has offices in the City Hall, and, I believe, the secretary, Mrs. Langworthy, or the president, Mrs. Thornton, will be found there."

He began to give directions but Julia Bang raised a hand, smiled sweetly, and said:

"Never mind, I'll find it," fairly flew to the sidewalk, and before the taxi driver could make a move had opened the door, saying as she seated herself:

"City Hall, please."

Although Julia Bang, when she left Chicago had been given several letters of introduction to prominent persons, men and women of Sawtooth City, she had absolutely never once thought of them after arriving in town. She did not know a soul, everything was strange to her, and the people, the streets, the buildings were different. All she knew about Sawtooth was what she had read in the newspapers, and that had not been much. It was a new, promising town, the newspapers said, in a new country; that was all, and enough for her to know.

She was a graduate nurse, had served in several big hospitals and been on call. However, for a year past, she had been engaged in a new calling

—the organization of pageants in mid-western towns in which the families of foreigners largely participated. She had been very successful in manufacturing towns, and had done much pioneer work along lines of Americanization long before such a thing was regarded as necessary. And it was for the purpose of giving pageants in Western towns that she had come to Sawtooth City which, she believed would be a good central point from which she could operate.

It so happened that the Civic Committee of Women was having a session—and a lively one—when Julia Bang appeared on the scene. She was invited to a chair by Mrs. Thornton whom she informed of her errand. Mrs. Thornton whispered to her, saying:

"The Committee has just about finished its work for the day, and when through perhaps you would like to speak to the ladies in a body. You couldn't find a better opportunity, for many of our leading women are present and will no doubt be interested in your plans."

The discussion at the time of Julia Bang's appearance on the scene was upon the proposition made by the mayor who had sought the endorsement and active coöperation of the Civic Committee of Women and all women of the city, namely, to invite the Rev. Gordon Roberts to



address the public meeting in the large Council Chamber of the City Hall upon the question of "Good Citizenship—What Is It?"

Julia Bang arrived just in time to hear the proposition stated, and was somewhat puzzled by what the first speaker had said, for the speaker seemed to be, in forming her sentences, covering up something that appeared to the stranger to be more or less mysterious. The speaker's remarks that "the less said the better" and "the more you stir a swill barrel the worse it smells" rather irritated her. And then when the speaker said, "everyone in Sawtooth has had a lesson in citizenship they'll not forget" and that "no good could possibly come from a further discussion" Julia Bang, who sat close to Mrs. Thornton, looked at her inquiringly. The newcomer was deeply interested in good citizenship, for while giving her pageants was a means of livelihood she had gone into the business not wholly as a money-making venture. She had some very practical ideas about it, and hoped there could be no good reason why a minister of the gospel shouldn't have the backing of everyone if he wanted to talk about good citizenship.

Finally by an almost unanimous vote the Committee resolved not only to give its full endorsement to Dr. Roberts, and the mayor's plan for a

big civic meeting, but to promote it in every way, especially in securing a large attendance of women.

When the meeting was ready to adjourn Mrs. Thornton arose and said:

"Ladies, we have with us a newcomer to Sawtooth City, Miss Julia Bang of Chicago. She informs me she is engaged in a good citizenship undertaking, and I presume, as she seeks the cooperation of the ladies of the city, she will be pleased to have an opportunity to talk to us. There being no objection, I will introduce Miss Bang."

The bachelor girl faced a gathering of thirty women, every one of whom, with two exceptions, had a husband. One of the exceptions was a maiden lady, the other a widow.

Julia Bang fairly jumped to the desk occupied by Mrs. Thornton and after thanking the meeting for the privilege accorded her, said in part:

"I have come to Sawtooth City with the intention of becoming, I hope, a good citizen, and am engaged in a calling that has for its principal object the making of good citizens, and in order to be successful it will be absolutely necessary for me to have the endorsement of every good man and woman in town. I have had this in Illinois and other states east of the Missouri river and have with me a bagful of letters and



newspaper clippings which I shall be glad to exhibit to convince you of my reliability.

"But I am a bit puzzled to note from what I have just heard that there is danger in discussing the subject of good citizenship, and would be glad to know more about it. Nothing that I can think of——"

"Excuse me, madam," said Mrs. Thornton, arising, "but there is something lurking behind the title of the proposed discourse with which you will, in due time, no doubt, be more familiar. Something has recently happened in this town that has brought down upon the heads of some of our women pretty harsh criticism—there has been a display of bad citizenship and some among us do not want to be scolded; that's all."

"Very well," continued Julia Bang. "Then I will tell you what my plans are for the creation of a better feeling between the native citizens and the newcomer from over the sea." And she then gave in detail her plans for a great pageant to be called the "Historical Pageant of Sawtooth Valley," and when the meeting adjourned had the pledges of everyone present to help in the undertaking.

Miss Bang after a half-hour's chat with Mrs. Thornton who arranged for a later meeting with the mayor, started for the hotel, telling the ladies she would be glad to have them call any time and

look over her newspaper clippings, letters, etc. She also invited Mrs. Thornton and Mrs. Langworthy to luncheon with her the next day, asking Mrs. Thornton to bring with her "the three best-known, most active, wide-awake bachelor girls in town."

This was a bigger assignment than Julia Bang had ever given anyone in her life, but she didn't know it. It was after she had left the ladies that the discovery was made by them that so far as known there was "no such animile" in Sawtooth City, barring Julia Bang herself.

In an older western town it would have been no problem at all. They might find hundreds in Denver; or even in Cheyenne, where women many decades ago began to vote, and to ride astraddle, and to do many other things as well as men, even making laws, sitting on the bench, practicing in court and writing prescriptions for sick folk. And all without assuming masculine ways. But Sawtooth City, when the boom struck it, wasn't Sawtooth City at all—not even a hamlet, unless Baxter's saloon, sixty miles from no place, and Sawtooth Ike's homestead and two or three others near-by could be called a hamlet. And there were not more than a half dozen girls over sixteen in the valley, and none of them was a native, every one coming from New England. And now, after two years we have a population made up

almost wholly of men and women, born and bred in eastern states. There had been two girls down the valley who might be called "bachelors," but it would be a far-fetched term for them. Both rode cow ponies and romped the plains and the hills, one known as "Miss Terrible," the other "Jane Awful" for the first-named was the daughter of a ranchman named Tarbell while the other was the offspring of Jack Arkwell. But just as soon as the valley began to bloom and a railroad head toward it, these families moved farther back, away from irrigation ditches, wire fences, macadam roads, etc., hating such things with the same vengeance as did the Indian.

"She has an odd name," said the usually timid little Mrs. Phillips, wife of the Mid-Continent's division superintendent, when the subject of bachelor girl assistants was brought up, "and without intending to be offensive, permit me to say she's well-named. Did you see her get into that taxi? Well, she banged that door all right, so hard that the chauffeur jumped a foot out of his seat. And when she left the door of this office she banged that."

"Oh no, she didn't," said Mrs. Thornton—"don't stretch it; the draft almost caught her in the door, and it would have cut her fingers off if it had; but she's quick as a cat. She's business, that girl."

"Girl!" shouted Mother Shepard, wife of a hardware merchant and mother of two sets of twins—"Where do you get your old maids and spinsters?"

"Well," spoke up Mrs. Johnstone, "we've got a few old maids and a few spinsters, and if you take some of them to Miss Bang she'll be disgusted. You'll find none in Sawtooth to match Miss Bang. But I wonder *why* she don't put an *S* on that name? It's singular, isn't it?"

"Oh, I don't know," cut in old Mrs. Larson, "she probably tinks her fadder's name is good enough, just the same as me, and if her name was Johnson she's the kind of a wimmins that would not put a stone on the end of it like you!"

The Civic Committee of Women hadn't had as much bantering among its membership for a long time. Most of them had been solemn-faced but now they were smiling.

"Now, ladies," said Mrs. Thornton, "remember your weakness; don't let this thing go so far that it'll be classifiable in the Gossip column!"

They all laughed heartily and Mrs. Larson suggested in her slightly broken English, "she seems to be, anyhow, one what you call bang-up fine girl."

At the hotel when Julia Bang drove up, one porter said to another:

"Look out, here comes Slam-Bang."



"Front!" shouted the clerk, and four combination bell-hop porters came to attention in a line before the desk. Mr. Bookkeeper stuck his nose into the figures on his ledger and Mr. Key Clerk was prepared for almost anything except a scream when he saw Julia Bang coming straight toward him. He rested a hand on each side of the register, assumed his pleasantest professional look and waited:

"Mr. Clerk," she began, "I shall have five ladies to luncheon with me at one o'clock tomorrow, and I want a special menu and the finest linen, china and silver in the house, some seasonable flowers, and three of the neatest waiters you've got. Let us have a liberal center-piece of dahlias, if you can get them; if not, something else that will be appropriate. When the chef has the menu ready let me look at it—something dainty, not quantity, but quality."

This was new business for the Valley Hotel, which was on the American plan, and up to this time no cook who had been employed—and there had been fifty in a year—had been dignified with the French designation; neither had any Valley Hotel cook ever said what the guests should have to eat. The order was sent to him once a week and he drew his raw materials from the storeroom with a requisition.

Hunting up the landlord who had heard about

the arrival of Julia Bang, the clerk passed to him her order.

"I guess she's some person all right," he said, "and as we'll have to begin doing this kind of business sometime we might as well start now—say, I'll give her a bang-up layout."

And he did.

The five ladies, Mrs. Thornton, Mrs. Langworthy, Miss Emily Hunt, Miss Sara Armstrong and Miss Ella Page made up the party. Not one was a bachelor girl. Miss Hunt had, she whispered to Miss Armstrong, never before been in a hotel dining-room in her life, and she was old enough to vote, and had voted several times.

"I have," said Miss Armstrong, "but never with anyone but father; so this is something of a new experience to me."

Miss Ella Page had attended three church conventions in her life, slept in strange hotels, once alone with the bed moved against the door, and had ridden one thousand miles on the cars without speaking a word to a human being, except the conductor, and then got off at the wrong station. Miss Hunt had been a school-teacher all her life. the others lived with their parents.

These were the "bachelor girls" introduced to Julia Bang.

The luncheon, both from the hotel service standpoint, and judged socially, was a success.

Everyone seemed happy. Julia Bang was a real host and she had brought the ladies together for the purpose, as she informed them, of getting acquainted—to form, she hoped, an acquaintanceship that would result in a strong alliance. So she entertained them principally with a modest history of her life, her work as a nurse and her later success in a field she hoped would occupy the rest of her life.

The guests, in turn, told her briefly the history of Sawtooth City and Valley, avoiding anything disagreeable and giving the newcomer encouragement to believe she had chosen a good field.

After the luncheon the guests were invited to Room 27 where Julia Bang had ordered extra easy chairs for them. Also she had had a small table brought in upon which she displayed the newspapers, clippings in scrap-books, letters of endorsement and other things concerning her work.

Lying upon the bed was an assortment of costumes, including native garments worn by the women of Holland, Switzerland, Poland, Italy and Russia.

The guests were especially interested in these things, for many of them were real importations, especially the headdresses, sashes and trimmed garments.

Miss Hunt, tall, slim and very prim, the kind

that holds her long arms before her most of the time with hands crossed at an angle of forty-five degrees, and whose hair was combed severely back from her temples, saw something hanging on a bed-post.

"Oh, isn't this odd?" she said. "What *do* you call it?" addressing Miss Bang.

"That? Why that garment isn't used in the pageant at all—that's—why, *those* are my pajamas!"

"Mercy me!" fairly gasped Miss Hunt; whereupon Miss Page dropped a Holland headdress on the floor and exclaimed:

"Well, I declare! And do you wear them?"

"Bless you, yes, my dear girl; it is considered quite up-to-date, don't you know!"

"Goodness! You're what they call a bachelor girl, then, aren't you, Miss Bang?" said Miss Hunt as she reached for the pajamas. "Are they the same kind the men wear?"

"Sure they are, Miss Hunt, and they are very practical and comfortable. You know one must be practical nowadays, and for that reason I spend no money for lace collars or other things for titivating myself off, using a regular Troy-made man's collar and a Cheney ribbon tie. Still I try to be womanly, and think I succeed pretty well, though the cosmetic and face-powder makers

would starve to death if all women were like me.

"Really, I'm too busy to do much fussing with frills; and I guess that's why I'm a bachelor girl; otherwise I might have a husband. But the responsibility of a husband is too great, and time too valuable for me to stop long enough to choose one, if I felt so disposed.

"Oh, yes, I've had chances, but no narrow escapes, for I never allowed any proposition of the kind that has been put up to me to reach a very serious stage."

The ladies were being beautifully entertained, especially the spinster, Miss Hunt, and the two maiden ladies who lived at home and who today, for the first time in their lives, had even been threatened with a taste of public life.

Julia Bang wanted someone besides married women in association with her in managing the pageant she intended to give; not because married women would not be of great assistance, but she had hoped to find at least two bachelor girls with whom she could work and whom she could help and perhaps form agreeable acquaintanceships.

Mrs. Thornton and Mrs. Langworthy, after they had separated from the three unmarried women, went back to their office.

"She didn't invite *one* of them to help her, did she?" said Mrs. Langworthy, as they walked along.

"No, and she won't, I guess. The fact has dawned on me that our stock of unmarried women is composed wholly of maiden ladies and spinsters."

"Well, isn't Miss Bang a spinster?"

"Certainly not!"

"Why?"

"Because she's a bachelor girl. Would a spinster wear pajamas, or a man's collar? Never!"

"This is a new distinction," replied Mrs. Langworthy.

"Yes, indeed, and with a difference," said Mrs. Thornton, emphasizing the word difference. "You see the difference we prate so much about in Sawtooth City is not always in our favor. We've got to get to work among our young unmarried women; and while I'm not the kind to urge girls not to wed, I'd never urge them to wed unless they believe firmly they should; that they felt the call of motherhood.

"There is a place in the world for unmarried women. Some of them are accomplishing things that no mother can accomplish. Take this Miss Bang whom the good Mrs. Larson said was a bang-up girl, for example. She is, and when in the same room with Miss Page, Miss Armstrong



and Miss Hunt it is easy to see how she escapes the designation of old maid, something none would ever call her, and shouldn't call any unmarried woman; but it is easy to discover why those estimable girls are often spoken of as old maids."

"Still, don't you think these girls are filling useful places in life?"

"Assuredly I do; certainly! Why, two of them keep house and look after a lot of youngsters, while the other is a teacher—all honorable and useful occupations. But they are not bachelor girls. And only one is a spinster—Miss Hunt: it is in every line of her face, her hands, her dress, her conversation; the others are maiden ladies. If it were to be admitted that one out of the four unmarried women we were with made it a practice to look under the bed every night, which one would you choose? Surely not Miss Bang. If you were to select the one who had independence and ability to look out for herself without assistance from anyone, man or woman, who would you choose?"

They had reached the City Hall and saw the mayor standing in the doorway.

"Let's ask him the difference between a bachelor girl, a spinster and a maiden lady," suggested Mrs. Thornton.

"Don't do it," warned Mrs. Langworthy.

"Why?"

"He'd probably say, 'Now ladies, now ladies, you are getting on dangerous ground. Get a copy of my late public statement.' "

"That's a fact, Josie, I never thought of it; but really I've said nothing against anyone, and I think we've made a discovery that may help us here in Sawtooth. Let's try to get some of our unmarried girls into our work, and take them away from their humdrum lives. Why should Sara Armstrong or Ella Page—and I don't care if it is gossip—spend their whole lives darning socks, frying bacon and making beds at home, when there are so many opportunities open to them in the world?"

"This is the age of woman. She is coming to her own rapidly, and within ten years such a thing as an old maid will be unknown, at least I hope so; it's up to the girls themselves, for the men are showing a disposition everywhere to smash the ancient bulwark that was raised against our sex in the days of St. Paul."

Miss Bang, Sawtooth's original bachelor girl, gave her pageant, and in so doing set an example for the girls of Sawtooth City that many of them followed. And now the town is distinguished for its Bachelor Girls' Club; and there are no cigarette smokers among them—no swaggering, manaping women or girls, just a brilliant young set,



though some are fat and forty. No man or woman in Sawtooth City would venture to refer to one of them as an old maid, or a maiden lady, or a spinster, unless perhaps, the term spinster be used in a legal document. The Bachelor Girls' Club is an influential organization.

"How about it, Julia," said the mayor to Miss Bang a few weeks later, "is it true that you are going to organize a Girls' Pajama Club?"

"What's the use?"

"Well, I thought you might start one and thus promote the wearing of——"

"Oh, Mr. Ellarson, they all wear 'em now!"

CHAPTER VII

THE BUCKHORN FIASCO

Julia Bang gave a number of successful pageants the following months in the new towns along the line of the Mid-Continent, and then failed in an attempt at Buckhorn; and in this failure was the beginning of a new life.

Buckhorn had also grown, and was anxious to appear quite as large on the map as its rival, Sawtooth City. However, Buckhorn was an old town on one of the first transcontinental lines; it had years before been a "cow-town" of prominence, and for a while a division point on the old B. L. M. & J. railroad. For a year or two it had a bad name but grew rapidly in spite of it.

Ultimately, when the railroad company rearranged its terminals, Buckhorn lost about half its population, and some of the men who had invested large sums in real estate and improvements lived to see all the good express trains pass through Buckhorn at the rate of fifty miles an hour; or, as one of the pioneers put it, "so fast that you could hear only one clang of the loco-



motive bell." When the terminal went to a point forty miles west two of the three banks followed, one hotel closed, and the grass began to grow between the planks of the sidewalks. A bank building that cost $75,000 was sold for the price of the vault, $7,500. The hotel, with the windows and doors taken away and used in a new hotel at the new terminal, was a ghastly looking skeleton at night, especially when the moon shone. It became weather-beaten and dilapidated. Two dozen store fronts were boarded up, and a former combination dance hall and variety theater was turned into a stable.

Buckhorn, after this, was inhabited by a dozen merchants who catered to the wants of a few cattlemen whose number was growing less year by year, and one could at high noon on almost any day fire a gun up the main street without fear of injuring anyone; in fact, the few cowpunchers who still patronized the one blind pig in the one weatherbeaten hotel that was left, frequently had target practice on Main street, and no citizen ever protested.

Suddenly, however, came the Mid-Continent branch, a feeder from the rich Sawtooth Valley, and Buckhorn had another boom.

Julia Bang evolved a plan to put the story of the rise, fall and recovery of Buckhorn into a pageant in which she utilized as performers the

Polish, Italian and Hungarian laborers and their children; also several tepees of Indians, a dozen bucks and squaws and twenty youngsters of both sexes. Her idea was to begin at the beginning, and that, of course, was with an Indian encampment.

Judge Dixon and other friends in Sawtooth City took a deep interest in the undertaking, not because they had any particular love for Buckhorn, but because Julia Bang was the originator and director of the event. The judge also found that by assisting Julia Bang in arranging her program he was forming acquaintanceships in Buckhorn that might add to his list of clients when he began the practice of the law later on as he announced he would do. Dixon was anxious to be of service to Julia Bang, however, over and above anything else. He had, in truth, formed a genuine attachment for her on account of the interest she had shown in the cases of youthful lawbreakers of both sexes, especially boys, and many times the judge had invited her to sit beside him when cases involving youthful offenders were before him. She had accepted these invitations and had, after the court hearings, induced the judge to discontinue trials of boys and girls in open court, taking up the hearings in chambers. The judge toward the end of his term on the bench finally insisted upon the presence of Miss Bang in all



such hearings, and ultimately, under an ordinance passed by the Board of Aldermen, secured her appointment by the mayor to the office of juvenile superintendent.

While at Buckhorn one evening, assisting in making plans for the pageant, Judge Dixon said to a local attorney:

"A runaway boy is her particular delight, especially if he is one of the nervy kind, having enough independence and fight in him to go it alone without help. Many boys have found her a good pal, for she has a way of approach and associations that has no savor of reform or patronage, or a don't-you-think-you-ought-to-go-home-to-your-parents manner. Not Julia. She knows that there often are good reasons why a boy is shifting for himself—a cruel father, a miserable home or something else. She knows, because she has had experience, that boys who run away from home do not always do so because they have been reading wild-West stories, going to the wrong kind of movies or because they are born that way—with the wanderlust of a Josiah Flynt. Her experience has taught her that ninety per cent of runaway boys she has met will listen to reason, and that they prefer the right to the wrong way of living if someone will tell them the right way.

"Julia Bang has taken more than a dozen boys out of court rooms, another dozen from police

stations and has picked up on the streets a few others, and by her methods put them on the right road."

It was several months after she came to Sawtooth City that William Snell was found in a Mid-Continent freight car by a policeman and dragged out almost frozen to death to a box stove in the station where, while he was being thawed out, Julia Bang met him. She had her bag in hand and a ticket ready for a trip to Lockwood; but she let the train go. The boy's face, while grimy with coal dust, looked good to her. And after talking with him a few minutes she found that he was a pretty good boy even if just a bit sarcastic in some of his replies to questions; anyway, he was independent, even if cold and hungry and penniless, and had no thought of whining about his lot. This was what Julia Bang liked. And she liked him also because he considered himself a man, and consequently couldn't be a runaway, for as he said, "only kids run away from home—and I'm no kid. I've been on the road six months and have worked a lot, but just now am a little down on my luck."

Julia Bang had an arrangement with the city authorities whereby she could take in hand boys of this kind, provided no crime was charged against them, without a visit to a court. However, in cases of real delinquency Julia Bang con-



tinued to intercede and rarely failed to win out and get possession by both the consent of the judge and the boy himself.

A warm meal, and a pat on the head, and perfect agreement on the part of Julia Bang with William Snell, won him quickly, and he was not long about telling her his story. It was this:

William Snell was fifteen years of age, the son of George Snell of Sheboygan, Wis., a man who had worked at almost every kind of honest labor, and reared a family of six children. William refused to go to school, after he had passed the fifth grade, though the father insisted that he must. William wanted to work, and because he wasn't allowed to do so he simply, in his own language "walked off," but did not go without telling his father and mother, both of whom protested. For two months he wandered, and finally returned home. He had had a taste of the road and it appealed to him, so he soon announced that he was going away again, this time to the Far West. The parents protested, for the boy had only a few dollars and they had no money to give him; it made no difference to him, he said, because he could work. Finally, George Snell had said, "All right, son, you have my blessing—do the best you can. Remember your mother's teachings." And after the father and the son had reached the front gate, where they stood alone,

the father gave the son some words of advice he had never before heard from his father.

Julia Bang got William Snell a job in the sugar-beet mills and found him a respectable boarding-house, meeting him frequently and talking with him. He soon was well-dressed and appeared happy and contented and said he had sent some of his small wage to his mother in Wisconsin.

Julia Bang, on this occasion, announced to him that he, William Snell, was, then, one of her boys, and she intended to introduce him to some other boys, members of good families who formed a camping party every year on Little Tooth Mountain. She introduced him, and all seemed to be going well, when one day she received a call from Judge Dixon, on the 'phone. Judge Dixon said:

"One of your boys—William Snell—is in trouble. He is now in my courtroom on a charge of having slashed a man with a knife—a workman at the beet mill; better come over."

Julia Bang lost no time in presenting herself in the courtroom, and with the consent of the court, took her protégé into a side room. . . .

"Tell me about this, William; how did you come to do it?"

"Well, the man called me a bad name."

"And did you stab him for that?"

"Of course I did."

"Well, I'm afraid you are in deep trouble—so



deep that I can't help you; but we'll see. What did he call you?"

"He called me a name that reflected on my mother."

"Why, William, no name that a man calls you can possibly reflect on your mother. Because that man said something, it doesn't follow that it is true, does it?"

"No, of course not; but my father is a good religious man, and many of the things he has always said to me you have said, though not all—no, not all."

"Well, what did your father say that was good that I haven't said to you?"

"I wouldn't repeat to you the words that man used, but I'll tell you what my dad said—and he's a good man, too, even if I couldn't get along with him always; he said, the last words he did say, too, when I saw him last was, 'Will, if any man ever swears at you and in his cursing calls into question the good name of your mother, kill him—kill him!' "

"And you tried to do it?"

"Yes, Ma'am."

"Well, William, that's too bad, but I'll see what I can do."

The man stabbed by William Snell was not badly hurt, a mere flesh wound on his wrist, and Judge Dixon called him to court before the case

was actually taken up, merely for a preliminary examination, and this was done in chambers.

"What," said the judge, "did you call this boy?"

The workman repeated it.

"Why did you do it?"

"Because he annoyed me."

"Are you sorry you called him that name?"

"Well, yes, sir, I am—I'm sorry."

"Then you must be sorry for the boy who, no doubt, loves his mother."

"Yes, I am, and I don't want to prosecute him —I'm to blame."

And so it was. The workman was not free from guilt. But William Snell's code was revised then and there by a talk with Judge Dixon, who said:

"Your father is no doubt a good man, but he is working on an old plan. That used to be the way to take care of a man who used that miserable combination of cuss words. But we are thoroughly civilized now, William, and it is a crime to try to kill a man who calls you names, no matter how vile, or upon whom he reflects. Another time have him arrested and brought into court. The law will take care of him. You may go."

This and other cases brought the judge and

Miss Bang into close friendship. The Snell boy became a good citizen of Sawtooth City, for his youthful experience came at a time just between boyhood and manhood when youth is, to a certain extent, reaching the fork in the road and is apt to take the wrong path unless properly guided. Miss Bang was there at the critical time and took the right steps.

Judge Dixon was considered by everyone in town, especially by the women, to be a great catch. He was a fine-looking man, in his thirties, modest, a good dresser, and provided well for his mother who seemed, with the exception of the bachelor girl, to be his only woman associate.

When the time came to enlist the assistance of the Indians to perform a war dance and fight a sham battle in the Buckhorn pageant Miss Bang assigned the task to Judge Dixon and he visited the reservation on Box Elder Creek for the purpose. A half-breed was engaged to choose the bucks and squaws and their offspring and on the day set for rehearsal they were there in all their glory, as were the Italians, Polanders and others. Miss Bang had, in preparing her scenario, planned to show the Indians in their wild state, war paint, war bonnets, bows and arrows and all, making a charge upon a small settlement, which, according

to plan, was to be repulsed by the "settlers," assisted by a company of U. S. Regulars from Fort Remington.

Concealing themselves in bushes beside a small creek the Indians, at a signal from Miss Bang, made a dash for the "settlement." Under instructions they were to shout, pretend to shoot their arrows, and go through the motion of scalping men, women and children; the "settlers" were to fire blank cartridges from rifles and pistols, and finally the soldiers were to come to the rescue, round up the red-skins, and later, after a supposed lapse of years, they were to be shown living civilized lives, together with samples of their agricultural products, and all to conclude with a tableau of a big buck Indian, in a white man's costume, standing behind a plow.

But when the "settlers" began to fire their blank shots, the Indians believed they had been inveigled into a trap and were to be slaughtered, and so they pitched into the "settlers" with deadly effect. The old war spirit was especially awakened in three of the bucks, and the people who had gathered on the fair grounds to witness the first rehearsal of the pageant were given a most realistic exhibition. The whoops were real and full of savagery; spurs were sunk deeply into the ponies as they trampled the "settlers", their



riders slashing right and left with their tomahawks, cutting arms, shoulders and faces, others shooting their arrows, while the "settlers" wholly unprepared for anything of the kind, stampeded for cover.

Only one of the "settlers"—old Dave Stone, a trapper—stood his ground; and throwing down his rifle and blank cartridges, he whipped out a sheath knife and waded into one of the bucks. Before the soldiers separated them they had succeeded in doing considerable damage to one another, though neither, it was found, had a fatal wound. Explanations were soon forthcoming.

Several men and one woman were seriously wounded, and had it not been for the presence of real soldiers, under command of a veteran officer, there would have been some real scalping. As it was the Buckhorn doctors were busy for a week attending to tomahawk and arrow wounds.

Miss Bang's career as a manager of pageants ended here, and the first train to Sawtooth City took her home with Judge Dixon.

"Judge," she said, as the train sped homeward, "I guess I'll have to find another job; my juvenile position is only a nominal affair so far as salary is concerned. What do you think I might do?"

The Buckhorn fiasco had its amusing as well

as near tragedy phase, and the amusing phase was just at this moment appealing to Ralph Dixon, so he said:

"Did you ever think of housewifery? That's a good calling!"

Julia Bang was seldom caught unawares and shocked. She had, however, unconsciously been leaning upon Ralph Dixon not only for help, but sympathy, and just now he seemed to be her only near dear friend upon whom she felt she could pour out her true feelings.

They sat together in a day coach with none in hearing distance, and what the judge said caused her to arise, rest her right hand on the plush back of the seat and look him steadily in the eye before she said:

"Never in my life, Ralph Dixon—never—until this very day."

Judge Dixon noted the earnest manner of her speech, and at once sought to pass it off with:

"Well, Julia, the right kind of a man will come along, I'm sure."

And then he tried to change the conversation into other channels, but Julia Bang was silent and almost unsociable until the judge said:

"Julia, why not come home with me to dinner; mother will be glad to have you, I know."

"I shall be pleased to accept your invitation, Judge, for I certainly am very fond of your



mother, and it will be a chance for me to avoid too much inquiry about this affair from *Herald* and *Sun* reporters, for they've no doubt heard about it by this time. You are sure your mother will be agreeable to an unannounced visit at meal time?"

"Oh, yes, certainly; she is at me all the time trying to get me to bring someone home, and I do it, too, frequently, though I have never once had a lady guest."

"Well, then, this will be an experiment."

"No, Julia, don't imagine for a moment that it will be anything of the kind—you will be received cordially and treated like a daughter."

"No doubt of it, but won't she think——"

"Never mind about that. Mother thinks whatever I do is all right, and if you go home with me there will be no question in mother's mind that will give her uneasiness. She knows my ways pretty well."

Julia Bang never received a warmer welcome in any home, and after dinner remained a couple of hours to rest up, on the advice of Mrs. Dixon who had heard from both Ralph and Julia the story of the "Indian massacre" as the judge insisted on calling it.

The judge noted that his mother was unusually cordial not only in greeting Julia Bang, but during the dinner and afterward; also that the in-

vitation to call again was pressed very earnestly. He escorted Miss Bang to her boarding house at eleven o'clock that night, a distance of a dozen blocks, during which walk Mrs. Dixon was the principal subject of discussion, the conversation being opened by Miss Bang who said:

"Your mother is a sweet dear woman, Judge, and there is no mystery so far as I am concerned why you love her so dearly and devote so much attention to her. I think I could love her quite as well as you do, too. She seems to have nothing else to live for, but her son, and prepared to make any sacrifice for him."

"Yes, that's true, Julia; had it not been so, it is possible I might have at least considered matrimony a long time ago, although there is but one woman in the world I would marry. The fact is, Julia, I am so deeply in love with mother that I doubt whether I could be a good husband. You know when the average woman weds she contracts for all her husband's love, and usually enforces it to the letter. Mothers are tolerated by wives, but I know personally of no wife who would ever share——"

The sentence was never completed for who should they meet but William Snell who without ceremony, and in excited tones, said, addressing both:

"I have spent the entire evening looking for

you, and this is my first job as a reporter—my first assignment for the *Morning Herald*. The office has a sensational telegram from Buckhorn about the Indian fight and your departure, and the city editor says they want statements from both of you, if possible, to go with the dispatch."

"Well," spoke up Miss Bang, "in the first place, William, I want to congratulate you on finding such a nice position, and I hope you will succeed and become a great editor. But, William, I have really been trying to avoid this very thing. It is all very distressing to me."

And turning to Judge Dixon, she said:

"But, Judge, I can't refuse; even if it is embarrassing to me it will help William, and I am in duty bound to help him. What do you say?"

"I say by all means give him a statement. We will all go to my office and fix it up in good shape, telling just what happened. Maybe it will give William a standing in the *Herald* office just when he needs it most."

"But we'll have to hurry," said Snell, earnestly, "for I must have the story in the office before one o'clock."

Turning on the lights in the office, Judge Dixon said:

"Now, William, write what I say. This is to be an interview with Miss Julia Bang, and I am to appear only as a side issue. You may say, how-

ever, that I was with her, and that I advised the abandonment of the pageant plans at Buckhorn."

And then Judge Dixon gave what was published the next morning as an interview with Julia Bang. It was a lively statement of just what transpired; and the description of the battle between the big Nez Percés Indian and Stone, the old trapper, in which the latter's gleaming knife and the former's hideous yells and lunges with his tomahawk, played a large part, was given in the minutest detail.

Miss Bang at the close suggested to William Snell that perhaps the *Herald* might need another reporter, and if it did she would like to try her hand at it.

"I'll speak about it," he said as he thanked both the judge and Miss Bang, and when he reached the *Herald* office he wrote an introduction to his interview, saying:

"Miss Bang, while still laboring under considerable excitement as a result of her experience, readily consented to make the statement which follows," adding that this would probably be her last attempt at pageantry.

It was midnight when Judge Dixon left Miss Bang at her doorway. The subject under discussion had given way to a discussion of William Snell, the boy who had, in spite of his great handicaps, found a position where there were oppor-



tunities for his advancement, and they agreed that for a time, at least, they would quietly assist the boy in his work. Judge Dixon and Miss Bang, both being in close touch with sources of news, soon had Snell playing a star engagement on the staff of the *Herald*.

For a week they devoted all their time to the hunt for news and its development, and to suggesting leads for the young man to follow. This kept them close together, and while helping to fill his note-book one day William Snell suddenly said:

"There's one big story that I want, and I want it first for the *Herald*. You are both good friends of mine, so you'll not mind if I tell you what it is—if I don't—well, you might let some other reporter get away with it."

"Why certainly, William," said Miss Bang, "anything we have will be for you to the exclusion of everyone else. What is it?"

"Yes, what is it, Willie?" put in the judge.

"Well, you see, either one of you—or maybe both—might get married, and if you did——"

"Never!" said the judge, laughing, "never, Willie, but I'm well, I'm already engaged—and deeply in love, too."

Miss Bang nearly collapsed, but soon recovered from her astonishment, saying:

"Oh, Judge Dixon!"

"Fact—sober fact—I'm engaged to be my mother's life-long sweetheart, and have told her that I shall never divide my love with anyone else."

"That would make a good story," was Snell's comment, "but of course I couldn't print it."

And thus the subject was dropped until William Snell had departed.

"But suppose," said Julia Bang, diving into the problem before Snell's footsteps had taken him a rod from the door, "suppose you found a wife who would not only not divide that love, but add some to mother's store? There might be someone who would love your mother quite as well as you do, even though that may seem impossible to you. I can well understand the depth of your affection, and the fear you have that marriage might disturb a relationship that is, to my view, one of the most beautiful I have ever known. You surely love your little mother; and I don't see how anyone can help but love her. She is the most gentle person I've ever met."

"Yes, Julia, she is my sweetheart, and no act of mine shall ever cause her sorrow."

"There are many young women in Sawtooth City who would never consider your mother, Judge, once they made up their minds that they wanted you."

"How well I know it, Julia. But none of them



loves me, and thus far I have been free from any such danger—only one woman has ever been in my mind, and she not seriously for the reason that I will not allow the matter to become serious while mother lives. Some day I may tell you more about it."

While this talk proceeded Judge Dixon was picking up his papers and some volumes of Supreme Court reports, preparatory to a trip to the court house.

"Julia," he said, "I'm interested in a case today that will have some news value, and if you have time I wish you would see Snell and tell him to see me at six tonight."

She promised to do so, and then left to attend a meeting of the Y. W. C. A. While there she received a message from Mrs. Dixon asking her to take luncheon with her the next day, and accepted the invitation.

Upon her arrival at the Dixon home the next day she was informed by her host that the judge had 'phoned he would be detained downtown and could not be home for luncheon. Julia expressed her disappointment in a conventional way, though she was unable to conceal her feelings from herself. Mrs. Dixon, however, said while the tea was being served:

"You know, Miss Bang, since I lost my husband

and came West, I have made but few close friends, and have, I begin to feel, been rather selfish, though really I have not intended to be. I have devoted all my time to my son, and I fear have made him feel that I am depending on him for too much, and as a result his freedom seems to have been somewhat narrowed. He devotes no time to anyone else, especially women, and I begin to feel that I am selfish and doing him a great injustice. Apparently he doesn't feel as I do about it, for he seems to enjoy looking after me and never leaves me to shift for myself when he has odd hours to spare. It is always, 'Well, mother, where shall we go? What can I do for you? Do you want anything?' This is a fine relationship, and I am proud of my son for his loyalty to me. But I'm sure he must be sacrificing a great deal, though there is never a look or sign to indicate that he is not perfectly happy and contented with his lot. Nevertheless, it isn't exactly natural.

"Furthermore, I am beginning to see that to be really happy myself, and to feel that I am dealing justly and fairly with my son I should encourage him to form a closer friendship, if possible, with you. You know something about a woman's intuition. It is very strong in me, and I *know*. I am making no mistake when I say that I am positive that your friendship for my



son is deeper than it is expressed. Moreover, I am sure that his respect for you is more than mere respect, and that if it were not for me he would have told you so long ago."

"Why," Mrs. Dixon!"

"Wait, please, just a moment, Julia. I know this is unusual, but I have a mother's duty to perform. My son has a wrong conception of his duty to his mother. His love is so intense for me that he is foregoing happiness that belongs to him. He may think he is perfectly happy in lavishing all his love upon me; but that is mother love—a true son's love of his mother. But there is something else. He is human, and it is human for him to want a mate.

"And, after all, his love as it is expressed for me is not as satisfactory to me as he thinks, for it makes me unhappy, though he doesn't know it. I would be perfectly happy, Julia, if I could see him married to the woman I am sure would respect and honor him; there would be no such division of his love as he fears—not at all. As it is, I am a lonely woman, though I wouldn't have him know it for the world, and it is because . . .

"Julia, I am actually courting you! How strange it does seem! But remember, the circumstances are remarkable and unusual."

Julia Bang, "confirmed bachelor girl," business woman, independent and resourceful, had for a

long time been bracing herself to meet Cupid's onslaughts. She had more than once admitted to herself that she had met the man who wouldn't need all her time and attention, and thus interfere with her plans for an active life. She had thought only of a public career, and believed that a husband would be in the way, and had said so more than once. Now she was willing to admit that at least one man lived who would fit into her scheme of life; but he loved someone else, and was averse to a division of his love. He had said so, and he was a man of his word.

Mrs. Dixon continued: "Julia, I am going to tell Ralph this very night that his happiness and mine—and yours, too—depends upon the addition to this household of a person who shall be known to the world as Mrs. Ralph Dixon—and you are that person!"

"How wonderful, and how surprising this is, Mrs. Dixon, and how useless it would be, even were I so disposed or tempted, to try to conceal the true feelings of my heart. I have never confessed even to myself that I love Ralph Dixon; but that there is something greater than mere admiration I now admit. Furthermore, I confess that I look upon his mother as one I could love quite as well—as—yes—as I *do* love Ralph. We have been together a great deal of late, and he has told me more than once of his infatuation



for you—and how it would be impossible for him to shower his love upon someone else. He believes it would be a shock to you—that a wife would demand all of his affection, and such a thing would never appeal to him."

"Remember, Julia, there has been no discussion of this subject, at least so far as you are concerned, between Ralph and myself. What I have said to you has been prompted by intuition and by my sense of justice. Your love of Ralph would never chill mine. I would be happier to see him love you."

CHAPTER VIII

MOTHER PLAYS AN UNUSUAL PART

Julia Bang never for a moment was an idler; even when, as at this time, she was seeking a new field for her talents, and discussing with the publisher of the *Sun* an offer of the editorship of a household page she was busy trying her hand at writing. She knew little of kitchen work or sewing, but could write entertainingly. So for a week she submitted samples of her work to the *Sun*.

Judge Dixon, on a certain day, found her at his home with his mother, gathering in a batch of recipes for cakes and cookies, pumpkin pies and marmalade.

"Well, Julia," he said, as he hung up his hat and shoved his stick into the cane-rack, "what's up—anything for the good of humanity?"

"Oh, yes, Judge, I'm borrowing some of your mother's recipes for the *Sun*, and if I can convince the editor that I know a few things about housekeeping and can write grammatically and entertainingly I shall in a few weeks be a regular member of the staff. But really, Judge, your mother



is furnishing the brains for the *Sun's* household department today."

"Well, mother's got the brains, Julia, no doubt of that, and I'm sure she likes you well enough to loan them to you any old time you need them, though I can't see where brains come in contact with editing a household department!"

"Oh, Ralph!" said Mrs. Dixon. "What do you mean?"

"Not a thing, mother, except this: the average household department is a syndicate proposition edited with a pair of shears! Buy a good pair of shears, Julia!"

"Now, Judge Dixon, you are throwing cold water on something that needs warmth—encouragement. The *Sun* isn't that kind of a newspaper, and the assistant editor of the Household page is not an artist with the shears," said Julia.

"All right, Julia, waste your talents if you choose; but it seems to me you could make a greater hit if you would write editorials, boost for suffrage, tax reform, political honesty, abolition of child labor, and so forth. You are not a household person. Mother might possibly make a good editor of a cooking column; but you, never."

This was rather disappointing to Julia Bang, but she believed Ralph Dixon was right, though she couldn't see, she said, how she could write

editorials when the editor had no vacancy in that department.

"Well," said the judge, "I'm going to launch a weekly myself in another month, and devote its columns to political and economic discussion, land-law reform, irrigation, and other topics of state-wide interest, and I here and now offer you the associate editorship at whatever salary Dolan has promised to pay you for your household work. What do you think of that, mother?"

"I'm delighted, Ralph."

"And so am I, Judge."

"Oh, call him Ralph, Julia."

"All right—*Ralph.*"

The judge colored just a trifle and eyed both women sharply. And then Mrs. Dixon spoke up:

"You are a couple of children, and in spite of all your pretensions, neither one of you is as happy as you ought to be, and all because——"

"Mother!"

"Yes, Ralph, I mean it. I am unhappy, too, because you misunderstand me."

A jingling 'phone bell took the judge to an adjoining room, and in a moment he returned and apologized for leaving so abruptly, but explained that his presence was demanded at the court-house. The county judge had sent for him.

The two women were left alone, and Mrs. Dixon lost no time in continuing the topic that seemed so near her heart.

"Ralph will soon ask you to marry him, Julia; what will you say?"

"How do you know he will?"

"Intuition—nothing else."

"He may talk to you about what you just said, Mrs. Dixon."

"So much the better."

"Why?"

"Because if he does I shall tell him that his failure to respond to the dictates of his heart is causing me great unhappiness."

"You seem to be sure of me."

"I haven't a doubt."

"But he may never ask me."

"Yes, he will; if he doesn't, I shall."

"Mercy, do you mean it?"

"I do—the next time I have you two together."

"Suppose I disappear?"

"You won't. You love Ralph, don't you?"

"Yes."

"That's enough—he loves you—and I love you both. What more could be desired?"

"Nothing . . . If I could only call you mother!"

"Do it!"

"All right—*mother*—and it is the first time I ever did say it in my life, for my mother died while I was coming into the world."

"Julia, kiss me—my daughter."

While this remarkable scene was being enacted, Judge Dixon was hurrying to the Court House, and wondering if his mother had gone clean crazy. "Why," he said to himself, "she is trying to marry me off—how embarrassing to poor Julia! What will she think of me?"

The judge was in conference at the Court House for an hour, at the end of which time he was called to the 'phone to hear this:

"Please come right home; this is Julia—your mother is ill—come quick, but do not be alarmed—the doctor is here."

Judge Dixon hailed a passing cab and in a few minutes was in his home, being met at the door by Julia, who said:

"Little mother quite gave way to her feelings after you left—Ralph—she is terribly in earnest about us—that is—and she swooned when I said—I said—that you just—well, you only admired me because I—well—because I am so independent—and that you couldn't love anyone but mother—and wouldn't——"

"And she fainted?"

"Yes, for a few moments she seemed to have no pulse, and I called Dr. Ladd, and when Dr.



Ladd came she lay on the couch with her eyes closed—and she said—she said—oh, Ralph, she said—thinking you were standing there and not Dr. Ladd—she said—she said: 'Ralph, I want you to love Julia'—*me,* Ralph—'and if you don't love her'—then she swooned again, and Dr. Ladd looked mystified and told me to call you right away, and I did."

Then Mrs. Dixon came into the hall, pale and trembling and found Ralph Dixon and Julia Bang embraced, and Julia's face tear-stained.

"Mother," said Ralph Dixon, reaching out and drawing her to them—"mother, I *do* love Julia; but I never realized it—exactly—until this very moment."

"And you, Julia, do you——"

"Do I? Of course I do, mother—I love him better than all the world—and I love you."

"Then we are all going to be happy, aren't we?" said the judge. And they agreed that Mrs. Dixon was some match-maker. She admitted it herself, and when William Snell reached the scene with a big note-book and a pocketful of newly sharpened pencils, in answer to a hurry-up call from the judge, Mrs. Dixon had fully recovered her composure, Dr. Ladd had been sworn to secrecy, and William Snell was provided with the "scoop" he had so nervily solicited. It was a double engagement, his announcement said, in-

cluding the establishment of the *Valley Review*, with Julia Bang, bride-to-be as associate editor; also the judge's statement that he would retire from the bench at the end of his term.

The wedding took place three months later at the Dixon home and it was several years later that Mrs. Ralph Dixon announced, when someone remarked upon the great attachment that existed between mother and daughter-in-law, that neither she nor her husband "popped the question."

CHAPTER IX

HAPPY IN THE OLD HOMESTEAD

The third year of Sawtooth City's history was one devoted to whipping into shape the odds and ends of private and public businesses. Mr. Ellarson had been re-elected mayor, Judge Dixon had been married, declined a re-election, and taken up the practice of the law after building a comfortable new home for his wife and mother. The burned district had been entirely rebuilt, the county seat moved to Sawtooth City, a half-dozen factories added to the industrial section, two theatres built, and the branch railroad to Buckhorn completed. Things had assumed an orderly routine, and everything was moving along smoothly. Mr. Ellarson had about completed by September, the erection of a new home on what came to be known as the "Ellarson Reservation"—that part of his real estate holdings occupied by his old claim shanty. Many fine homes had been built in the neighborhood; but both Mr. Ellarson and Mrs. Thornton had agreed that the old log house and the lean-to made of sawed lumber should be

preserved. The new house, a severely plain affair, was built facing Aspen street, in plain view of some of the downtown business buildings. It was modern in every respect, but in appearance inferior to others near-by.

Calling in a landscape gardener Mr. Ellarson outlined to him his plans for the preservation of the old homestead, and they were developed rapidly and beautifully. Young pines and aspens from the mountains and cottonwoods from the bottoms of Flathead were transplanted, forming a pretty grove with the old home in the center facing a lagoon and small lake, the water being drawn from the irrigation ditch. From the start the little old homestead was quite hidden from the streets. Its old fireplace was rebuilt, and the interior of the house finished off in rustic fashion. The old logs were stripped of their bark and varnished; the beams supporting the slant roof were also finished off, and a new roof—a gable—built. It made a fine summer house, and while primarily intended as a play-ground for the two Thornton boys, became, as we shall see, a place of great utility in years to come. The grounds consisting of a full block were properly arranged into lawns, flower and vegetable gardens, a driveway from the street to a garage, etc.

The one great event in the lives of Isaac Ellarson and Abigail Thornton was about to be con-



summated at the altar. Both had been too busy with other matters up to this time to think of a wedding. But now it was decided to turn away for a period from the cold-blooded affairs of business and surrender entirely for a while to matters of the heart. There had been, nevertheless, some of this through all the strenuous days, especially those of the year just passed, and they had been together much more than ever before, devoting considerable time to plans for the future, the building of the new home, the preservation of the pioneer log house, and thought and discussion of the two boys.

So it was finally decided that there should be a quiet home wedding with none present but a handful of the most intimate friends and a short trip to Denver. Dr. Roberts performed the ceremony and the bridal party was out of town before the story became noised about. In a week they had returned to the new home which they found in perfect order due to the efforts of Mrs. Langworthy, Julia Dixon, Mrs. Larson and a few others.

"Now," said Mrs. Ellarson as soon as they had been well settled, "let us take the boys off to school." It had been agreed that this must be done. This discussion occupied a week's time and finally it was decided to take them to a famous boys' school on the Hudson near New York City.

"I am a reporter for the *Star*," said a young man as he approached a clerk at the Biltmore, New York, a month after the Ellarson family had gotten settled down in their new home, "and I'm looking for a man named I. T. Ellarson. Is he registered here?"

"He is, sir, with his wife and children."

"Please send up my card."

In a few minutes the clerk said to the reporter: "The coast is clear, Room 1173."

The reporter found Mr. Ellarson with the door open, waiting, and smiling.

"We have heard a lot about your city, Mr. Ellarson, and I have been instructed to ask you to answer a few questions concerning it."

"All right, shoot! But first come in and let me introduce you to my wife. She has placed her two boys in a school near Tarrytown, and we have just returned from there."

"It is reported, Mr. Ellarson, that your city has never been what they call in the West a wide-open town, not even at the start, and that gambling and drinking are unknown."

"Well," said the mayor, "I wouldn't put it exactly that way; but you may say that there has been, with one single exception, nothing of what you people here in the East connect with a new western town. We have had but one shooting affair. As for gambling, such a thing has been

unknown. We have had practically no drinking."

"You did have some shooting, then?"

"Yes, we did; but it was not caused by either one of the evils mentioned, but from gossip about a woman."

The mayor told the whole story, and in reply to the reporter's question, "What has been the result?" said:

"Gossip is taboo. However, I do not pretend to say"—turning with a smile toward the bride—"that our women do not discuss one another's clothes; that would be expecting too much. A new gown or a sealskin are of just as much interest to the Sawtooth ladies as they are anywhere—in Freeport, Long Island, or Norwalk, Connecticut; but you may say it as coming from me, with as much emphasis as you wish to employ, that our women do not dissect anyone's character. Good behavior has its reward in Sawtooth, and we punish no one for what they have done in the past. I don't pretend to say that we take every Tom, Dick or Harry into our homes; but if there are any we do not invite because we do not feel that association would be agreeable, we do not go any further.

"You may say that such a thing as gossip is unknown in Sawtooth City. We like that reputation because we won it at such a cost.

"The other things—our location and natural

advantages—were simply accepted and developed. Some of us had lived rather rough lives before the railroad came; but the majority were law-abiding. We had examples all around us of communities quite as advantageously located that began in the old way by opening up wide to everything that has in the past been deemed necessary in a new town and failed.

"We profited by forming an early temporary organization in which everyone was invited to participate. We didn't say, 'Here, Jim, you used to keep saloon; you're under suspicion,' or 'Tom you're a gambler—we don't want any gamblers'; or 'Mary Jane, you are bad and there's no hope for you.' No, sir! We—and quite a number of us—had no particular reason to look over anyone's head—all agreed that it was worth a gamble, anyway, to begin business clean. Even the gamblers were willing to take pot luck and several of them did. An ex-saloonkeeper was chosen chief of police, and a man who had been a gambler for years was, shortly after our first town meeting, chosen judge of the municipal court.

"You may say, if you please, that we found some real bargains in men and women, most of whom had been branded as unfit for public service, if not as actual outlaws and outcasts.

"Talk about forest conservation and reclama-

tion projects!—I'm for men, as the late Henry George once said. Let us save our men first, then let them turn their attention to saving the trees, draining swamp lands, and irrigating deserts!

"Why should we let good men go wrong, or stay wrong, when they have taken the wrong road? Tell your readers that I make this suggestion, not, however, as a man who has accomplished any great feat in this line of endeavor, but as one who has at least made a start. It is a great field, but it is not being worked as it should be, the only approach to a correct and logical system being that of the Salvation Army.

"It may be said that constant effort is being made to reform men and women; but the efforts are largely force and not example. Laws are passed to regulate nearly everything, rigidly enforced, and when a man violates one of these laws governing his personal habits, for example, and is sent to jail, he is unceremoniously booted out of good society and kept out of it, perhaps all his life; and this, too, while his offense was, in fact, merely a disagreement with his fellow man as to what was proper conduct. Men of the old West had their own ideas of justice; often they were exaggerated and wrong, but they soon learned what *was* right, and became good citizens, obeying laws because they *were* laws; still they were (and now are) considered unworthy—called feud-

ists or worse and left out of good society, embittered, prejudiced—wasted human material.

"We, in our experiment, tried to set a good example, and used as little force as possible; and when men saw that other men and women who came amongst them prospered by living right it was an easy job to build up a town in a wilderness upon an entirely new plan, utilizing practically all of what is generally considered worthless, offcast, outcast, human material. Yes, sir, I'm for men—the worst of them, too, for not often do you find one that is all bad.

"Of course, you understand, and if you don't I'll explain, no action taken by any of our first officials, especially the judge, had any authority in law; but what they did had the same force that the actions of the old-time miners' courts had—they held the newcomers to a certain degree of good behavior, for they knew bad conduct meant a quick march out of town. Ultimately things were legalized, but our first concern was with conditions as they existed.

"We found that our 'judge' was a law-student. He filled his position with honor until duly elected; so did the chief of police, the ex-saloonkeeper, who was proud of the confidence shown in him. He is now one of our most respected citizens. We even went to a tough town near-by, and when it began to collapse from the disease



affecting it, we practically drafted all of its police force, chief and all, believing, if they understood the situation, that they would know better than any others we might employ, how to steer us clear of the breakers.

"We even admitted women who had been disreputable, the only requirement being that they work at honest toil. Few spurned the opportunity, and those who remained have reformed.

"Our greatest achievement aside from this one.—the utilization of rejected human material—has been in the accumulation of community oneness and happiness. And in being happy and working together it has been easy for us to accomplish much in the way of a low tax-rate. Everyone pays taxes; there is no dodging, and our treasury is always in good shape, our bonds find a ready market in the financial centers, and we are never hampered in making public improvements.

"You might call us the Sawtooth City Salvage Corps, and say that we have salvaged a lot of the good in what apparently was hopeless human wreckage. We have wasted nothing of this kind. You know that there's some good in the worst of us. We've found lots of good in men who might be considered all bad, and demonstrated that where there was a kernel of good it could be cultivated successfully; that as a rule men prefer to live right once they understand its advantages.

"We are all, I think, advancing and living more scientifically and appreciating our God-given blessings better than we did. A few years ago a certain variety of nut-bearing tree seemed to be doomed. It was blighted, no matter where it grew. Then came the tree surgeon who not only saved the tree but extended his campaign to other varieties; and now many fine trees on great estates that had begun to die are taken in hand, patched and trimmed, properly watered and soil-enriched. There may be scars on some of these monarchs, but they are still furnishing shade over driveways or footpaths. Some of us Sawtooth people may have scars, but they are hardly noticed where there is so much good in evidence.

"Sawtooth City has succeeded because it has conducted its affairs as a good family does; we cooperate, help one another and make no serious class distinctions.

"The heads of our churches entered with spirit into our plan to make the city a model, and they coöperated, though of widely divergent creeds, and they are still pulling together. The same is true of our newspapers. 'Sawtooth City first' has been their shibboleth; they have worked in perfect harmony.

The reporter had been told that Mayor Ellarson was a multi-millionaire and put the question direct:

"Are you a multi-millionaire?"

"Yes, sir—but in happiness only. It was my early ambition to be wealthy—in gold or property—but I found happiness, and still find it, in other things. My old homestead of 160 acres, upon which some of the city is located, and that of my wife adjoining, are now inhabited by 10,000 or 12,000 happy people. Some of them to whom we sold lots have thus been made richer materially than we are; and because of this we are very happy, I assure you.

"Out of our original holdings we have reserved an entire block containing a new home and the old one I built on my claim. Some day, if our plans are not disturbed, this block will be a city park for all the people.

"We have now between us enough in stocks and bonds and real estate to assure us, with no bad luck, enough to live upon comfortably and reasonably the rest of our lives. And what more could any man or woman ask!"

In substance this interview appeared in the *Star* with the caption:

MEASURES HIS WEALTH IN TRUE HAPPINESS.

"Abigail, I'm tired of reading; let's go back into the homestead. We've lived in this house ten

years, but I'll never get used to it—come on!"

And so the former mayor of Sawtooth City picked up his hat and stick and repeated, "Come on, Abbie, let's go out there for the evening. With both boys interested in their own homes—come on, Abbie!"

"All right, Isaac, you go ahead and I'll be along in a few minutes, after I've finished my letter of resignation as president of the Civic Society of Women."

An hour later, before a four-foot log in the fireplace, sat the retired pioneers of the model city of Sawtooth. Poking the ashes under the log Isaac Ellarson said:

"Abigail, there never was much fascination for me in this old shack when I had to live in it, but somehow it seems comfortable, for the sight of the old logs takes me back in my memory to those strenuous days—particularly to two or three —the one at the irrigation meeting, the one on the mountain trail, and finally the one when I thought death had laid its hand on me. And I like to think of those times, for then began my real life —and yours."

"Yes, Isaac; you remember I told you you didn't know how to whisper?"

"I do, indeed; but I knew how to talk, didn't I?"

"You surely did. But now, Isaac, you're tired.

Let me fix that pillow; there, now move your chair over a bit closer to mine and let us look into the fire. So. All I can see written in the small flames is happiness. What do you see?"

And, receiving no reply, Abigail turned and looked at Isaac.

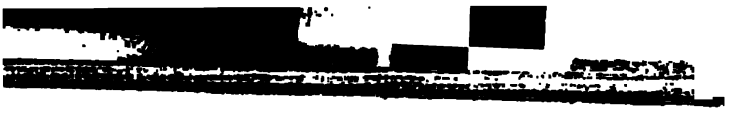
He was sound asleep with a smile playing across his rugged face.

"Happiness is ours," she said, and arranging her shawl so it covered both their shoulders, she, too, closed her eyes.









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